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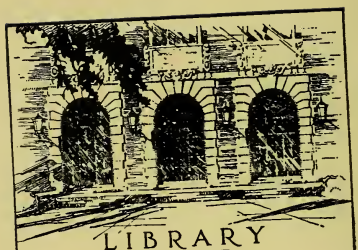

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THE ADVENTURES

OF

A KING'S PAGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ALMACK'S REVISITED."

"If you would know whether Virtues or Vices keep a man farthest from a Court, go to Court and learn."—WINTER'S TALE.

"Les bonnes copies sont celles qui nous font voir le ridicule des méchants originaux."—ROCHEFOUCAULD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1829.

THE ADVENTURES

OF

A KING'S PAGE

CHAPTER I.

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THE ADVENTURES

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CHAPTER I.

It was on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in the month of May, that Arthur Beverley, now in his twenty-second year, entered Hyde Park, on his return to England. As he advanced towards Apsley House, the immense concourse of carriages and equestrians which crowded the various drives, impeded his progress, and allowed him time to admire a scene which, although familiar to every person residing in London, must always strike with wonder the

eye of a foreigner, or even that of an Englishman who has long resided in foreign parts; for unquestionably the cavalcades of the Parisian Champs Elysées, and Vienna Prater, combined with those of the Prado of Madrid, and the Ekaterinoff of St. Petersburgh, on the days of their most brilliant festivals, would fall far short in splendour, animation, and number, when compared with our Hyde Park on the afternoon of a fine Spring Sunday.

Next to the prodigious resources and the extent of our great arsenals and dock-yards, nothing is said to have struck the foreign Sovereigns with greater admiration, on their visit to England in 1814, than the vast concourse of noble horses, splendid vehicles, and, above all, the countless multitudes of well-dressed people, which every where appeared upon their passage.

"I am not surprised that you English complain of your poor's-rates," said the amiable King of Prussia, "*car où sont vos pauvres?*" "I believe that the law of impressment has been extended from the Navy to the whole nation of *roast beefs*," said the Emperor Alexander (who hated us) to Prince Wolskonsky,

"*puis voyez comme tous ces insulaires sont bien habillés.*"—"*Oui, Sire,*" rejoined the courtier, "*malgré leur liberté tant vantée, je crois que la police a mis tous les John Bulls des trois royaumes en réquisition, pour les faire passer en revûe devant votre Majesté Impériale.*" In short, the Tzar, recollecting the anecdote which is related of the Empress Catherine and Potemkin, returned to his own dominions fully convinced that all the carriages and horses of the United Kingdom had been embargoed, and the populace decently dressed by a government Ukase, in order to impress him more strongly with the vast affluence and population of the capital.

As Arthur approached still nearer to Hyde Park Corner, he was encountered by Lord Colnbrook: the young men (between whose ages there was a trifling disparity) had been school-friends; and having immediately recognized each other, the Marquis gave his horse to his groom, and jumped into Beverley's barouche; and in reply to the eager questions of the latter, informed him that Lord and Lady Roxmere had left town for a day or two, on a visit

to the Prince at Brighton; that Miss Delmore, who all the world said was to marry Sir John Cumber immediately, was in attendance upon her sick father at Beverley; but that the Granthams were in town, and that Camilla, more beautiful than ever, was the favourite of the year, as she had been the winner of the two preceding seasons—"Oaks, St. Leger, Derby, won them all, carried every thing before her," exclaimed the young Peer.—"But, if I mistake not, it will now be her turn to pay forfeit; forgive my venturing to say so," added his Lordship; "but it will be your own fault, Beverley, if you do not walk over the course."

Arthur made no reply to his noble friend's observation; but its effect on his mind was not the less forcible. "What a joyous animated scene!" exclaimed Beverley, as they advanced deeper amongst the crowd.

"True!" rejoined his companion; "yet there is something contradictory and inconsistent in this display of Sunday finery and merriment; for the stranger who sees all our shops shut, our thoroughfares deserted, our theatres closed, cards forbidden, music condemned as indecent,

and a mournful silence prevailing throughout our streets, cannot fail to remark the inconsistent eagerness with which all classes of the community press towards the Park, in all the pomp and glory of dress, liveries, and equipages, on a Sunday afternoon, as if it were really meant as a set-off against the ennui which they are doomed to endure at home for the rest of the evening."

"It is but an innocent amusement, after all," rejoined Arthur; "and certainly there appears to me to be something much more consistent in our English mode of keeping the Sabbath, than in all the rioting, feasting, and depravity which one meets with on the Continent."

"Perhaps so," replied Lord Colnbrook: "but this also has its evils; for, in consequence of there being no other legitimate amusement, the clubs, taverns, and gambling-houses, are more frequented; and consequently, to say the least of it, there is more money lost on that night, than on any other during the week."

The slow pace at which the carriage advanced, afforded full opportunity for Arthur to examine the passing crowd. To a novice, all

classes in this vast moving mass of bipeds and quadrupeds seemed confounded, nor was it possible for Arthur to distinguish the spruce Calico stiffly perched on his hired hack, from the gallant guardsman lounging upon the rails; nor the Almacks, or almighty Patronesses, for the terms are nearly synonymous during the London season, walking by choice, from their mantua-makers, who did it from necessity: he could neither distinguish the over-starched, would-be City beau in his cabriolet, from the negligent but elect man of fashion on foot; nor the neat and admirably appointed equipage of the nobleman's wife, from the not less well got up vehicle of the merchant's mistress.

To the practised eye of Lord Colnbrook it was far different, and he readily answered Arthur's inquiries; not, however, without laughing at the unfashionable solecisms every now and then committed by the latter. "I thought that the livery of all the Royal Family had been scarlet or crimson," said Arthur, pointing to a gaudy, open landau, (its pannels and harness bespattered with plated coronets and heraldic devices, and its flaring liveries streaming with lace, epaulettes, and embroidery,) which was

preparing to enter the privileged drive; whilst its inmate, a coarse-looking woman, dressed in all the extravagance of a fashion suited to a person thirty years younger than herself, sat spreading out her person, and rolling about with an air of vulgar contentment, such as one imagines that Mrs. Jordan would have assumed in the "Devil to Pay," had Nell made her entry in a coach.

"You thought quite right," replied the Marquis, in return to Arthur's question; "and there exists about as much affinity between any of the Royal Family and that personage, as there is between the colour of their respective liveries."

"You must forgive my ignorance," said Beverley; "but I had always heard that Rotten-Row was reserved solely for the carriages of the Royal Family."

"What! do you not know my most noble, the sposa of that merry grig, your old school-fellow, and my cousin, Hawksbell?—but how should you?—'faith, she has undergone as many metamorphoses in her career through life, as a wheel-barrow in a pantomime. Apropos of that machine, if her memory be not treache-

rous, it must astonish her when she thinks of old times. Little could she then have dreamt that the day would ever come when the King's Park-keepers would hasten through the crowd, at the risk of their necks, to admit her into Rotten Row: a privilege, by the bye, of which the King was so tenacious, that he is said to have replied to some one who petitioned for it, 'I cannot grant you that; but I will make you a Peer if you like.'"

"I now see who it is," said Arthur, "and know her history: however, in despite of his rank, I conclude, that the exhibition of her finery here, or at the theatres, or the display of wealth at inns and watering-places, or perhaps the publication of her charities and 'movements' in the public journals, comprise the extent of her progressive society; and that she is not visited by any but Hawksbell's immediate relatives, or a few of those sycophants, who, for the sake of a dinner, care not how they degrade themselves."

"Why, one would imagine that such must be the case in this country where we so unjustly pride ourselves upon the superiority of our moral conduct over that of all other nations; but it

is quite the reverse;—Kings admit her to their Courts."

"That," said Arthur, "is no criterion, now-a-days, either of character or gentility; besides, how is it possible for a King of England to sift the good from the bad?"

"Princes of the blood," resumed Lord Colnbrook, "are engaged by her to be responsible for the infantine peccadillos of never to be born sinners, whilst pious Bishops are retained to christen them; noble Senators do not disdain to be of her privy councils, whilst their wives and daughters are pulling caps to be invited to her public breakfasts; Judges who have branded with infamy a thousand less guilty persons, declare her to be an excellent woman; whilst Baronets tremble at her beck, like brokers at the nod of Mr. Rothschild;—in short, were she to pop her head out of her window, beat a gong and cry out, 'At home,' all London, from the highest to the lowest, would hasten towards her, like a swarm of bees after a tin kettle."

"One cannot be surprised," observed Beverley, at the Aristocracy being degraded in the opinion of the nation, or that foreigners should

form a most contemptible idea of our *haute noblesse* and *première Société*, when they see such a specimen of presumption and vulgarity almost at its head."

"I do not affect to be very scrupulous, or particularly moral," answered the Marquis; "but, in truth, it is a most extraordinary anomaly, that the influence of wealth and impudence, the crude unblushing mixture of gold and brass, (rank has nothing to do with it,) should thus overcome all these obstacles, which, to the credit of English society, have hitherto been considered insurmountable."

"I think, at all events, since she enjoys the privilege of Rotten Row, that she is quite right to take advantage of it," said Arthur; "any thing must be preferable to the ennui of dragging up and down that interminable string, where the eyes are blinded with dust and the ears confounded with the rumbling of wheels."

"Depend upon it, that her object is not to avoid the evils you talk of," retorted the sarcastic young nobleman: "no; although that string were the tread-wheel, that dust Cayenne pepper, and that noise more deafening than the roaring

shingles on the sea-shore, she would brave them all to attract attention and gratify her vanity: the odds are, that before two minutes have expired, she will turn back and fall into the line."

Scarcely had Lord Colnbrook uttered these words, when, as he had predicted, Lady Hawksbell's carriage retired from Rotten Row, and passed close to that of Arthur, who stared with astonishment upon seeing his companion first kiss his hand in the most affectionate manner, then thrust his body half out of the vehicle and exclaim, "How d'ye do, my dear Marchioness? what a sweet hat! how uncommonly well you are looking!—I received Hawksbell's note: how kind of you!—I've sent an excuse to Oatlands, on purpose to dine with you to-day.—By the bye, here is my friend Captain Beverley, Lord Roxmere's grandson: he's dying to be introduced."

"I shall be happy to know the Captain, though I don't think his grandmother is on my list," replied the vulgar monster.

"Mr. Beverley—the most delightful woman of her day, the Sévigné of England!" exclaimed Colnbrook, introducing his companion,

and adding, "You may think yourself fortunate, ere, indeed, you have arrived in London, thus to obtain an honour which half the first people in town are vainly sighing for." Arthur bowed, and mumbled something about highly flattered—too fortunate; and the vehicles moved forward in opposite directions, the Marchioness exclaiming, "Remember dinner's at eight, and you may bring the young man if he's on the pavé."

"In Heaven's name! how could you humbug the woman with such unblushing coolness? Is it possible that you, who have been lashing her so unmercifully, would give up an agreeable party at Oatlands, to dine with her?" were the very natural questions of Arthur when they separated.

"In the first place," rejoined Lord Colnbrook, laughing, "there is no party at Oatlands to-day; the Duke went last night to Belvoir, and two of the Duchess's pugs have been vaccinated, besides *à la guerre comme à la guerre*; and really she does not give such very bad dinners, though her parties are just the kind of quodlibet which one meets with at

a Spa table d'hôte, amongst whom one now and then meets some very amusing people. It is, however, fully worth the trouble of knowing her, to assist at what she calls *her* family parties, were it only to see how far it is possible for an old woman to make a fool of herself, nature having very kindly arranged that matter for her husband. Poor fellow! when I see him following close at her heels, she puts me in mind of a Life-guardsman's charger with a rat-tail.—Here," continued the Marquess, "if you require a specimen of his talents and her presumption, read this;" and so saying, Lord Colnbrook placed the following note in Arthur's hand.

Hamilton Place.

"My dear Marquess,

"Next Friday being the anniversary of my tenfold happy union with my dear Marchioness, she has determined to celebrate the auspicious event by a small fête at Oak-apple Villa. With her usual kind consideration, she has permitted me to ask a few of my relatives; and I therefore take the liberty of requesting the pleasure of your company to an early dinner

on that day. The Marchioness requests me to give out that she does not positively desire any one to come in Court-dress; but I know, *entre nous*, that she expects her guests to pay her the compliment. Believe me,

"My dear Marquess,

"Ever yours much,

"HAWKSBELL.

"P. S.—The Marchioness is just gone out of the room; so I open my letter to give you some idea of the fun we shall have. For the gentlemen there will be bobbing for silver eels in rose-water, for a topaz-headed cane; and running after a Chinese piggy-wiggy lathered with palm soap, for a bon-bon box. There will be jumping in silken sacks, for a velvet reticule; and a foot-race for two dozen cambric shim-shims, as the Marchioness calls them, for the ladies. We are then to go through the ceremony of the Wichenoore flitch, and the Duke of ——— is to personate Sir Philip de Sommerville: however, as we think there would be something rather *infra dig.* in bacon, we are to receive a Westphalia ham instead. After

dinner, the Marchioness will make a speech, which, together with my answer, we are practising; and we shall finish the evening with my sow's pig syllabub, and puss in the corner;—so do come, it will be such fun."

As the various carriages passed one another, Arthur's cicerone continued to describe their inmates. "That," said he, as he kissed his hand and nodded to a pretty woman who sat listlessly lounging in her chariot, her complexion pallid from late hours and hot rooms, her countenance lengthened with ennui, and her lustreless eyes dimmed with the excess of London dissipation; "that is one of our first-class ladies of fashion, whom you may always recognize by their being seen with every body's husband but their own; by the familiar recognition of the grand crosses of fashion, such as I; and by the protecting smile she accords to the uplifted and more respectful salute of the young companions, such as you; lastly, by her unshaved coachman and rough bony jobs, whose dry cough, "that trumpeter of death," and staring coats, give ample proofs of the eternal

racketing and night-work to which he, she, and they are constantly exposed."

"Who is it?" demanded Arthur.

"The celebrated Lady Atherley," rejoined the Marquess: "by the bye, she gives a music party to-night. I will take you; Mademoiselle Trillenheim, whom all the world raves about, will be there; and you will be the very thing itself for Lady Atherley: novelty is her motto; and I saw by the momentary sparkle of her eye, as we passed, that you had not escaped her observation."

"To judge by outward appearance, that must be something of the same stamp as your friend Lady Hawksbell," said Arthur, as they approached a pair of large badly bitted horses sinking under a volume of plated harness, and dragging after them a cumbrous coach.

"With this difference," answered the Marquess, "that the combined efforts of the whole peerage can never make a lady of the one; whilst the uplifted unwashed fingers of a few citizens have made a lord of the other."

"The Lord Mayor then, I presume," said Arthur.

"No less a person than his ephemeral Lordship," rejoined the other.

At this moment, half a dozen smirking, simpering damsels, who sat with their legs crossed, in true mail-coach fashion, their flounces tucked up, and their heads staring out of either window, as if they were admiring the men in armour at their papa's own show, now poked forth their faces, and to the particular horror of Lord Colnbrook, simultaneously screeched out, "La! ma! there's the Marquiz, which represented the Dook of York at papa's inhogiration feast, and which danced with Belisaria at our Easter ball!"

"The devil take the whole batch of witches! and God forgive me for the pun," said the Peer, vainly endeavouring to cut them.

"And which seems quite ashamed of himself," grunted out the mamma from her corner, "for not coming, nor sending no excuse to our white bait party."

"*Sacrée bête!* I wish you had a whalebone sticking in your throat instead of your stays!" shouted out Lord Colnbrook, as he saw several of his fashionable friends near the railings

laughing at him. To his great relief, however, a move took place, and the carriages parted.

"What did they mean by your representation of the Duke of York?" demanded Arthur.

"Oh!" replied the other, "his Royal Highness promised to dine at the Mansion-house on the Mayor's day; but being prevented, he commanded me to make his excuses. The worthy host, confused at the unwonted circumstance of finding himself seated amidst so many noble guests, at last became so bewildered that he Your Graced Viscounts, My Lord Marquessed Squires, mistered Dukes, called the Chancellor your Majesty, and despite of all my endeavours to convince him of my identity, not only dubbed me Your Royal Highness, but insisted on addressing to me the speech intended for the Duke."

"How like that lady is to Miss Grantham," said Arthur, as they passed a splendid vehicle, peculiar for its form, colour, the brilliancy and richness of its hammercloth, harness, and liveries, as well as the mettle and shape of the noble animals attached to it.

"There may be some resemblance in person,"

rejoined the Marquess, "but none in mind; no —novice even as you are, I should think that the exaggerated and extravagant style of dress, the half bold, half timid look of the lady who alone occupies the interior of the carriage, might betray to you one of those unhappy creatures whom the tribunals of their country have declared for ever infamous. I am not much given to moralize," continued his Lordship, "but, in my opinion, the overdone splendour, public exposure, and assumed indifference of that poor woman, convey a better lesson than the sorrow and repentance of others who endeavour to conceal their shame and disgrace in privacy and retreat."

"I cannot exactly understand your mode of reasoning," said Arthur.

"A few months past," rejoined Lord Colnbrook, "and that lovely creature was surrounded by courtiers and friends; she was equally respected for her virtue, admired for her beauty, and envied for her talents; she was the pride of her husband, a model to her children, and an honour to her family: all London was at her feet, the noblest courting her acquaint-

ance, the most virtuous jealous of her friendship: she could not pass by this spot without receiving the greeting and salutation of hundreds. Look at her now; how changed! mark the averted faces of her relatives, and the cold glassy contemptuous stare of her former acquaintance; see her shunned with looks of scorn by her former husband's friends, and only acknowledged by the hangers-on of her present lord, and this too with a degree of easy familiarity a hundred times more galling than the icy coldness of the former:—nay, observe her very infants taught to avert their little heads, and to couple her remembrance with every thing that is most infamous and abandoned in nature; look at her, I say, and tell me if you think that the languid smile which appears to animate her countenance is not struggling for mastery with the sob of remorse and shame; or if those rich silks and lace do not conceal a heart callous to every sense of feeling, or seared to its very core with the bitterest goadings of conscious guilt."

After a pause, in which Arthur made some

observation in reply, Lord Colnbrook pointed to the next carriage and said—

"Those puffing, punchy nags; that fat coachman, in every pimple of whose nose there lurks a hogshead of March beer; that old-fashioned round-bodied landau; those perspiring, squabby footmen, seated in a rumble, their quaint liveries blanched with streaks of melted powder; that glum, pursy, red-faced Mama, who appears surprised that the people in town do not doff their hats, and stroke down their heads, even as the country clods are wont to do, as she passes from "the hall" to the village church; those cherry-cheeked freckly damsels, who, with outstretched necks and astonished faces, are giggling with delight, utterly unconscious of the smiles which their own appearance creates: all those bespeak the family of some wealthy country member, who is come up to go to sleep under the gallery; or if he does rise, affects the lungs of the House like a catarrhal fog in November; whilst his wife is enjoying the select pleasures of panoramas, exhibitions, and charity balls, in hopes of get-

ting rid of some of that numerous group of daughters."

At this moment, to the great amusement of Lord Colnbrook and the fashionables around, the young ladies called out at the top of their voices, "John, John! oh dear! John, we are smothered with dust here, and want to walk. La! Mamma, there 's John walking with cousin Luke of the Guards," and again they screamed forth, "John! John!" to the surprise of about fifty footmen, who turned their heads on hearing this general cognomen of their species so loudly proclaimed.

"I envy the little unsophisticated things the *naiveté* with which they seek to gratify their gregarious propensities," said the Marquess; "it would have done Jean Jaques' heart good to witness such a picture of nature; why your woman of fashion would die a thousand deaths ere she would call for assistance, save through the legitimate medium of her coachman's little finger."

"Amongst the pedestrians, each class has also its distinguishing attribute, I conclude?" said Arthur.

"Certainly," rejoined his companion; "there, for instance, do you see that group of young men, some seated sideways on their horses, whilst others are lounging on the rails close to the little clump of trees opposite Stanhope Street? By their negligent yet gentlemanly manner, their merry mood, their recognition of every body fit to be known, and the unmerciful mode in which they quiz others, you may discover some of the young *aspirants* who are candidates for vacancies amongst the *Santa Hermandad* of fashionable Dons, some of whom are walking a few yards farther from the railings."

"How is one to distinguish those awful persons of whom all London stands in awe? There is nothing remarkable in their dress or manner."

"Not in the eye of a profane," said the Marquess; "for it is by the simplicity and peculiar neatness of their dress, rather than by its singularity, that they are conspicuous; but the manner, that is, the great criterion—see how they keep aloof, and merely skirt the crowd; observe the attention and whispering which

their appearance creates; and the respectful, half-timid manner in which they are saluted by those who are bold enough to risk a bow, which, if it is not altogether disregarded, is returned with a stare, as if it said, 'Who the devil are you?' observe the impertinent, vacant look with which they affect to forget the man with whom they dined the previous day; above all, mark the unblushing effrontery with which they dare to walk and converse with some of the most notorious abandoned women in London, in the very sight, and within hearing of their sisters, or of other ladies of virtue and character, who are weak enough to pardon this daring insult, this outrage to good breeding, decency, and themselves."

"There," continued the Marquess, "walking still farther from the crowd, supported by a pair of lanky long-striding damsels, is one of those respectable Sunday-dinner-giving philanthropists, whose only means of procuring partners for their daughters, is by constantly feeding a quantity of voracious young officers, or fortune-hunting younger brothers, to which class those gentlemen in attendance most pro-

bably appertain: for who else would be seen walking with women whose backs taper upwards like *mâts de cocagne;* who with most unfilial barbarity punch their heels at every step into mother earth, and who grasp their garments behind in such an equivocal manner, as if they were afraid some one would elope with their vertebræ?"

"That jostling crowd," said Lord Colnbrook, pointing to the moving mass near the railings, "is composed of a herd of nondescripts, much more extraordinary than that of Mr. Waterton, and who never leave their dens except on a Sunday: you may judge of the monsters' taste, by seeing them pause to admire Billy Button and Mr. Coates; while they pass without noticing the perfect 'turnout' of Lord Gwydyr, and mistake Lord Sefton's double-bodied curricle for an Isleworth tax-cart!"

As the Marquess was about to proceed in his observations, he was interrupted by an exclamation of "Good God, Mr. Beverley! Arthur! Stop! stop!" and upon turning round, Arthur felt as though the whole blood of his system

had rushed boiling to his heart, when he saw Lady Bertha Grantham and her daughters close to him. To spring from his own carriage and fly to the door of that of Lady Bertha's, and to pour forth with undisguised warmth all the delight he felt at seeing them again, was the work of an instant; nor was the greeting he received from his fair friends less cordial, or apparently less sincere: indeed, whether it was surprise at Beverley's sudden appearance, or consciousness of the deep intrigue which she and her mother were carrying on, the colour forsook Camilla's cheeks, and a tear started to her eye; it was the momentary triumph of nature over art and dissimulation: nor was it lost on Arthur, who had watched her countenance with feverish anxiety; and he could have worshipped those precious tears which appeared to him the fullest corroboration of that which he scarcely dared to believe possible. It was therefore with the utmost pleasure, as Lord and Lady Roxmere were not in town, that he accepted Lady Bertha's invitation to dinner, and then proceeded to his grandfather's residence.

"Admirable, my dear!" said the worthy mamma, as soon as Arthur quitted them, her countenance radiating, "Admirable! I know nothing of the human heart, if Beverley Castle be not yours, Camilla."

CHAPTER II.

Upon reaching Portman Square, Arthur found that his grand-parents were expected in town early on the subsequent morning; he therefore abandoned the idea of following them to Brighton, and proceeded to prepare himself for Lady Bertha's dinner-party.

For the first time in his life, Beverley found the operations of the toilet a matter of embarrassment. Never had the quantity of cravats scattered about the room borne witness to more numerous failures, nor the performances of Stultz been treated with more contemptuous obloquy; never, at one sitting, had so many pair of *bas à jour* been pulled into ladders; never had the *amour propre* of the valet been more deeply wounded by the master's un-

qualified abuse of his currant-jelly blacking; but above all, never was all this discontent more unnecessary, for Arthur was one of those few amiable mortals who, let them dress how they will, always have the air and bearing of a gentleman.

Upon being ushered into Mr. Grantham's drawing-room, Arthur found a large party already assembled: instead, however, of abandoning her young guest, *à la grace de dieu*, either to blow his nose, pull up his gloves, twiddle his hat, or stand gaping at the pictures, (the only resource for a stranger during the miserable half hour which precedes a London dinner,) the hostess either presented him to some of the most distinguished persons present, or briefly made him acquainted with their rank and names: an act of attention which, though it is considered essential to good-breeding on the Continent, is, strange to say, thought very vulgar with us martyrs to fashion, where every individual invited is supposed to be as well acquainted with the parentage and achievements of all those whom he may chance to meet, as Debrett, or the Red-book-man.

Arthur found himself seated at dinner, of course accidentally, by Camilla; and whether or not her toilet had cost as much trouble to her as that of her neighbour, to him its success was complete, never had she looked more beautiful. A plain white muslin gown, *à la Grecque*, apparently merely confined by a Georgian band of gold and crimson which encircled her waist, showed off her figure to the utmost advantage; neither flower nor riband of any kind was seen amidst her dark black hair, whose jetty luxuriousness contrasted wonderfully with the crystal purity of her neck, which was without any other ornament or trinket than a small Maltese chain and cross, which Beverley had sent to her from the Mediterranean. It is not to be supposed, however, that this simplicity suited the taste of Camilla, for she was passionately fond of jewels and splendour; but Lady Bertha had determined to try its effect on her young guest; and it was evident to eyes much less vigilant and practised than those of her Ladyship, that the impression made on Beverley was all that could be desired by the most speculative mother.

Amongst the most distinguished personages to whom Arthur had been presented, were the Duke of Ulsdale, Lord Dorimont, Sir Felix Fanwell; and as the names of these individuals will more than once recur in the following pages, I shall pause to describe them.

It would have been impossible for the most casual observer, on entering a room, to have overlooked the Duke of Ulsdale. It was not exactly the features of this nobleman which were peculiarly striking—for, although tall and well-proportioned, there was nothing graceful in his figure, nor handsome in his countenance; but there was a commanding dignity in his look, a tone of lofty breeding in his expression, and an air of superiority in his deportment, which bespoke him to be a man of high birth and exalted situation. Amongst his own sex, he was proverbial for his extensive information, his shrewd, calculating knowledge of human nature, and his intimacy with the weakness and passions of mankind; few men also were better scholars, possessed more unlimited resources of mind, or were more admirably calculated to converse upon every subject, whether it was

connected with the abstruseness of philosophy, the intricacies of diplomacy, or the more lively frivolities of the day. Having attained that age when the passions are blunted by enjoyment, and the finer feelings corrupted by habitual collision with the world, his Grace was consequently dangerous in his intercourse with the fair sex, and the more so, since there was nothing redoubtable in his exterior; but to the charms of a conversation replete with wit, grace, and anecdote, he united an inaccessible heart and cool head, the most refined gallantry, and the utmost fascination of manner. He did not march boldly to the attack, or attempt to gratify his own vanity by the exposure of his own strength, and his fair adversaries' weakness; but stealing quietly and imperceptibly to the edge of the fortress, he often established a lodgement on the glacis, ere the lady was aware of his approach; thus, more than one unfortunate had found herself invested, and unable to escape, without the surrender of her honour or peace of mind.

In addition to these qualifications, his Grace was a grand cordon of magnificence and display,

He was Archcorypheus of town and country splendour. His dinner would have created envy in the heart of Grimod de la Reynière himself; whilst his fêtes, déjeûners, parties, and suppers, defied the criticism of the most perfect epicure, or most fastidious votary of fashion. His immense fortune, the extreme regularity of his affairs, and consequent command of money, gave him great advantages over all other competitors for the prize of pleasure; whilst his exquisite taste, his princely profusion, and admirable knowledge of the *sçavoir vivre*, placed him at an immeasurable distance beyond all his rivals. Invitations to his fêtes were coveted with a degree of inconceivable eagerness; not to be asked there, was declaring oneself to be no one; and thus, no meanness, no trick, no abasement, was considered displaced, if employed in obtaining an entry to Ulsdale House; and his Grace must not unfrequently have stared at the daring attempts which were made by people, even of the highest class, to force themselves into his drawing-room.

* Original Editor of the celebrated *Almanach des Gourmands*.

The world accused the Duke of a too great fondness for money, and even ascribed the possession of a portion of his vast wealth to successful play. However, if true, that he had accumulated any large sums by this process—not altogether improbable from his coolness of temper, his skill in calculation, and, above all, from his immense command of capital,—his character as a player, and a man of unblemished honour, was beyond the reach of calumny. That his Grace, in despite of his magnificence, was careful to increase his wealth, was certain; this did not, however, proceed from that base and sordid attachment to the precious metals which gnaws the heart of the miser, but from his great inclination to all the most costly luxuries and enjoyments of life, of which no man more thoroughly understood the refinements. Although he did not ostentatiously exhibit his name, and nothing but his name, in every paper, as a species of decoy to charitable subscriptions; yet, unknown to the public, he had performed actions of the most princely benevolence: if he did not expend large sums either in disseminating tracts, or for the support of field-preachers,

the families of the artist, the manufacturer, and industrious mechanic, reaped the advantage of his wealth, and he the finest fruits of their labours. Engrossed by the pursuits of pleasure and luxuries, and abhorring the intrigues and cabals of political life, the Duke had taken little share, at least avowedly, in politics: whatever influence he possessed, which was not trifling, was employed *à sourde main*, and excited little observation; but whenever he did exert himself, his talents and influence were acknowledged in the highest quarters. Pleasure was, in fact, the idol of his speculations; and it must be confessed, that if his talents were in a great measure lost to his country at large, his perfect knowledge and profuse deployment of all the good things of life, were of inestimable value to his friends and satellites, of whom it may be supposed few men had a larger circle.

Amongst this latter sect, no one was more successfully constant than Sir Felix; though he was not one of those grovelling sycophants, whose mean adulations must even cloy the most voracious appetite. Equally attached to all the luxuries of life with the Peer, and not far

inferior to him in knowledge of their merits, Sir Felix was infinitely more fond of outward display. Whilst the blinds of the Duke's splendid mansion were drawn down with an air of mystery, as it were to conceal the costly rarities it contained; the *rideaux à jour* of the knight's small house were drawn back, and exposed to view the silks, damasks, vases, clocks, candelabra, and buhl cabinets, which were stuffed into it with all the profusion of Christie's rooms on a sale day. The equipage of the one could not be distinguished from that of any private individual, except by the simple coronet, unadorned by any heraldic blazonry; whilst that of the other was remarkable for the brilliancy of the harness, as well as the numerous chivalrous emblems which dangled beneath the helm of knighthood. The attire of the Duke was plain and gentlemanly; that of Sir Felix, peculiar for its originality. *En bourgeois*, his figured velvets, embroidered silks, his particular mixture, cane, great coat, or roquelaure, could be distinguished at any distance: in uniform, he might be recognized amidst a thousand cavaliers, by the quantity of gold lace on his coat and pan-

taloons; the gorgeous shell and tiger's-skin trappings of his horse, his enormous feather, *à la Niagara*, and his Damascus sabre, with its velvet and gold scabbard; all of which, as a testy old veteran observed, might have admirably suited Velluti in the "Crociato," but were at total variance with that code of laws so galling to all military men of taste, called the Regulations. Adherence to rules was not, however, precisely that virtue upon which Sir Felix particularly piqued himself; and, as an illustrious personage said of him, he merely wanted one step in rank to become a General exception.

Combined with much information and experience, and an inexhaustible fund of small talk, Sir Arthur possessed a large share of cunning and dissimulation, the most imperturbable coolness, together with the most consummate selfishness, and utter disregard to all the finer feelings of human nature. What was still more essential in a man of fashion, he was not a less perfect adept in the mysteries of gastronomy, than in those of virtù. He could judge of the merits of an *entrée* by its mere aspect, and of a bottle of wine by sniffing the cork; he could fix

the birth of a piece of Sêvre even in the dark, by passing his hand across its surface; and he could distinguish a Petitot across the Strand, through the densest fog in November. His applause was coveted by Ude, his discrimination was dreaded by Jarman, and in his presence the undoubted original of Mr. Phillips dwindled into a copy.

Independent of the pleasure the Duke derived from his society, his Grace found him useful on many important occasions; for he could arrange a *partie fine*, and ostensibly take all the *éclat* and payment on his own shoulders; he could sit with imperturbable gravity in front of a private box for a whole evening, as if alone, whilst his noble friend, ensconced behind the gilded lattice, was enjoying both the play and a *tête-à-tête*; he could canvass a borough, and bribe voters so adroitly, as to avoid all chance of Parliamentary investigation; and he could hasten into the city, and strike bargains an eighth better than the sharpest broker. Such was Sir Felix Fanwell, who, if he did not precisely correspond with what Voltaire calls, *l'ami du prince*, must still be admitted to have been

invaluable to a man of the Duke's habits and pursuits.

Lord Dorimont, another of his Grace's intimate friends, was one of the most agreeable and delightful men of his day. Abounding with wit, humour, drollery, and good-nature, though perhaps a little too prone to a pun, his Lordship was the life and soul of every party; and no man more usuriously repaid the good things he took in, by the abundance of those he uttered—if Heraclitus himself had lived in our time and met his Lordship, he would either have dried up his tears, or wept from sheer merriment. Kind-hearted, generous, and heedless, Lord Dorimont had been through life his own enemy alone; for it was universally acknowledged that he had no other; a circumstance the more remarkable in a man of his great wit and talent. Although no one escaped his satire, yet his observations were delivered with so much good-humour, and were so devoid of malice or ill-nature, and, above all, were uttered with a degree of drollery and originality so peculiar to himself, that the wound, if inflicted, healed by the first intention, without

leaving a scar behind. Observations which, if uttered by another, would not have excited a smile, in his mouth became irresistibly ludicrous and amusing; his mere presence predisposed every one to good-humour and harmony, and inclined one to feel satisfied with his neighbour and himself. With all this, his Lordship was a man of extensive information and considerable literature; and had he not followed the example of his noble friend, and entirely devoted himself to the pleasures and sensualities of the day, his country might have boasted of him as one of her brightest ornaments, and he might have been as conspicuous amongst the politicians and senators of Europe, as he was eminent for his social qualities in the very highest circles of fashion.

Although Lady Atherley, the lady mentioned in the last chapter, was not present; yet, as the whole party were to adjourn to her house, and as she was an intimate friend of Camilla's, it may not be irregular to describe her at this moment. Her Ladyship was one of that heartless class of women, of which examples are rarely to be met, except in the most elevated

walks of society. To great personal charms and fascinations, she added a remarkable boldness and decision of manner, an utter disregard for every moral tie, a complete absence of all feeling or sensibility, together with the most courageous indifference to public opinion. Disliking her children, whom she merely regarded as so many dials destined to betray the increase of her own age; and absolutely hating her husband, whom she had married partly for his vast fortune, and partly from the amiable motive of escaping from parental thraldom; she had ever despised the thoughts of domestic enjoyments, as much as she contemned the criticisms and animadversions of the world. Her ambition was not only to be talked to by the most fashionable men about town, but she actually gloried in being talked of; for, strange to say, her vanity appeared gratified in a greater degree than her delicacy was shocked, when she saw her name coupled with the grossest inuendoes and sarcasms in the most indelicate publications of the day. Although notorious for the number of her flirtations, yet she had hitherto skilfully avoided absolute disgrace,

and had maintained her position in society; not that she owed her salvation to the workings of principle, or the effects of virtue, but to the systematic calculations of self-interest. Too cold-hearted, mercenary, and devoid of sensibility, to be bewildered by that species of fatal exaltation, or rather aberration of mind, which has hurled so many unhappy creatures into an abyss of guilt and unavailing remorse, Lady Atherley, legally speaking, was both innocent and virtuous; but if there be any sin in the utter abandonment and corruption of the mind, the most wanton prostitution of the heart, and the absolute disregard of every sacred and moral tie, a more guilty person could not exist. After having rendered herself more than usually conspicuous by her flirtation with a young nobleman, in the dilapidation of whose fortune she was said to have been mainly instrumental, she had lately taken a fancy to Lord Colnbrook, and this, too, from no other motive but because she saw his gaining attachment for Fanny, whose marriage she was determined if possible to prevent; not that she felt the least affection for the young Peer, but

from that spirit of mischief and depravity which seemed to be her only guide. As for Lord Atherley, a good-humoured *gourmand*, whose sole pleasure in life was eating, she scarcely ever saw him; for, although they lived under the same roof, they were as much separated as if the House of Peers had torn their marriage bonds asunder. All she required of him was money, and of this no small sums were sufficient to satisfy her extravagance or profligate profusion. With such a person as her intimate friend and counsellor, one cannot be surprised if Camilla Grantham imbibed maxims the most fatal for a young unmarried girl, and such as were likely to terminate in her destruction when married.

Completely engrossed with his beautiful neighbour, Beverley paid little attention to the general conversation; he had neither eyes nor ears for aught but Camilla; and, in fact, the dessert was removed, and even the ladies had retired, while he was scarcely aware that the dinner had been served, or that there had been any other female present, save her who had sat by his side: and never did any mortal more

cordially reprobate the strange custom which produced this temporary separation; and as each succeeding bottle of "claret" was called for, he would gladly have seen the host and all his guests condemned to a similar fate with the Malmsey-loving Duke of Clarence.

In the mean time, Lady Bertha had watched each look and gesture of her guest with a lynx's eye; and although she flattered herself that he exhibited every symptom the most conducive to the success of her schemes, yet she was most anxious to set her mind at rest upon a point which caused her considerable doubt and uneasiness. Conscious that she had not only misrepresented Lucy in her letters, but that Arthur must immediately discover that Miss Delmore had rejected every proposal of marriage on his account, and that Lord and Lady Roxmere were most desirous of his union with their favourite, she saw the necessity of sounding how far not only Beverley would be affected by these discoveries, but whether he would be inclined to submit to the wishes of his relatives, and whether his sentiments for Lucy were such as to give her any grounds for

uneasiness. Resolving to lose no time in making this important discovery, she took him aside, when he entered the drawing-room, and, as if casually, said:

"How provoked Lord and Lady Roxmere will be at Miss Delmore's absence from town at the very moment of your return; of course, *en fidèle preux*, you are miserable at this *contretems!* I conclude, the moment the Earl and Countess arrive, we shall hear of your flying down to Beverley; you will be agreeably surprised, for I never saw any body so much improved. I believe Sir John's proposal had the effect of metamorphosing her,—she is really grown quite pretty."

"It would certainly give me the greatest pleasure to see her, or any other friend of my childhood," replied Beverley, with a degree of coolness amounting to indifference; and then, as his eye wandered to that part of the room where Camilla was standing, apparently in deep conversation with Sir Felix, he added, "But I am quite consoled, I assure you."

"Ah!" said Lady Bertha, affecting a tone of sentiment: "rely upon it, my dear Mr. Be-

verley, the consolation is reciprocal,—more, I fear, than reciprocal."

"By the bye," observed Beverley, after having bowed and placed his hand upon his heart in silence, "I hear from Miss Fanny—"

"Do not be so formal, my dear Arthur," interrupted her Ladyship: "for Heaven's sake! call them as you were wont to do—Fanny, Camilla; and forgive me, if, instead of the cold, precise Mr. Beverley, I venture to address you by the name which brings our intimacy so much more gratefully home to my heart. You know that I have so long been accustomed to look upon you as my own child, that I shall have some difficulty in learning to curb my familiarity."

"Say, rather, in placing bounds to your kindness," rejoined Arthur, pressing her Ladyship's hand: "I trust the day will never come when you may cease to consider me worthy of being your child.—But," added he, "I hear that Miss Delmore's match with Sir John is at an end; I naturally feel much interested in the welfare of my old playfellow, and cannot but regret her having thrown away such an admi-

rable opportunity of settling in life:—I fear," continued he, "that she carries her pretensions too far, and that her head has been turned by all your kindness to her."

Arthur could not have uttered a sentence more grateful to the ear of Lady Bertha, who replied, "Whether or not it is to be regretted, it yet remains to be proved: and as to her pretensions, I should think the fault does not rest with her; for I am certain she would gladly marry Sir John, or any one else, had not your grandmother interfered: what the motive of this interference may be, you best can tell;" and her penetrating eye seemed to search into the inmost recesses of his heart.—"By the bye, my dear Arthur," continued her Ladyship, with the utmost gravity, "I hope you were not offended with me for having spoken so freely on the subject in my letters; I was not aware, indeed, that there had ever been any thing serious in the report."

"No apologies are necessary, I assure you," rejoined Beverley; "for, if you allude to the boyish attachment which, I confess, did occupy my mind before I left England, all is at an end—

ay, as much as though it never had existed. This may appear strange, or, at all events, extremely fickle on my part: but I can scarcely be accused of inconstancy, much less of breach of faith; for not only had no declaration, no engagement been entered into, but we were prevented corresponding even on terms of friendship. I now most heartily thank my grandmother for having forced me to this prudent line of conduct; for, in my present state of complete indifference, any engagement which I had felt binding would have rendered me eternally miserable;—as it is, I am absolute master of my liberty at least," added Arthur, "in as much as regards Miss Delmore; and if, as Fanny seemed to hint, the Earl and Countess are still desirous to unite me to their *protégée*, I am rendered by their non-act completely free from all control on this head. You have now had my confession of faith on that subject," said Beverley; "and ere long, it is most probable, I shall again have recurrence to your patience and indulgence upon a subject of much more vital importance to the happiness of my future existence:" and so saying, he proceeded to accept

Lord Colnbrook's offer of attending him and Lord Dorimont to Lady Atherley's music party, where they were to be followed by the Granthams.

Lady Bertha, overjoyed at the extent of her discovery, and fully anticipating the nature of Beverley's second confidence, saw not only that she had nothing to fear from any rivalry with Lucy, but, as far as it was possible to calculate on human probabilities, the prize she had so long coveted was almost within her grasp.

CHAPTER III.

"THE party is small," said Lord Dorimont to Beverley, as they drove rapidly towards Lady Atherley's house, "and you will find its composition as select as it is possible for any thing of the kind to be in London."

"You will see all the most distinguished performers of that company with whom you are to enact the future drama of life, collected within a very small compass," observed Lord Colnbrook.

"And you must, at first starting, boldly strike at the highest walks, my young friend," said Lord Dorimont. "*Chi va piano, va sano e lontano*, may be an admirable country-house maxim; but in the great world, as on the stage, you must grapple at once with the most promi-

nent characters, or be contented to crawl about all the rest of your life, unhonoured and unnoticed, amidst the common throng of crevice-filling guards and choruses.—But," continued the Viscount, "there is little fear of Mr. Beverley's success, if he makes his début under your auspices, Colnbrook; he cannot have a more admirable prompter; that is, if he follow your advice, and not your example."

"And with you as stage-manager," rejoined the Marquess, "it will indeed be strange if he is not safely carried over the waters of Fashion."

"Then, I fear, it will be by the *pons assinorum*," retorted Lord Dorimont.

"By the bye," observed the Marquess, turning to Arthur, "we must alter that tie a little, my dear Beverley, there is a *soupçon* too much starch; we have relaxed considerably since the citizens have adopted the use of *empois:* egad! they seem to verify the vulgar adage of the dog and the rope."

"How so?" demanded Beverley.

"Why," replied the other, "Corpse, the coroner, assured me, the other day, that half the

apoplectic cases which came before him and his merry men, are superinduced by the immoderate and injudicious use of this jugular cordial."

"Then he ought to bring his verdict, died of cholera morbus," said Lord Dorimont.

"Whilst we are on the subject of the toilet," observed Lord Colnbrook, "I must venture to suggest another trifling amendment; those *troisièmes*.—"

"*Troisièmes!*" exclaimed Arthur, utterly at a loss to imagine what particular portion of his person had attracted his noble friend's criticism.

"I see you do not understand me," rejoined the Marquess, "and I am not surprised: I borrowed the word from Wurst, my German tailor."

"And I have no doubt you would like to repay him that and your bill in the same coin, and say with Ariosto, *Qual ch'io debbo, posso di parole pagare*," said Lord Dorimont.

Taking no notice of this observation, Lord Colnbrook continued: "The fellow was with me this morning, when the following dialogue took place between us. 'Is dere no oder littel ding vot you dinks of dis morning; vont I take your

messure for some droiseemes,' said he. 'Troisième!' returned I, 'why where will you find a second like me; but what do you mean?' 'Ach! dat is a delikit littel vort vat I cut out myself; it's an imbroofment in de Enklech lank-which!' replied the fellow, grinning."

"To what a height the growth of science reaches,
Tailors turn pedants, and authors cut out breeches,"

said Lord Dorimont.

"What! you allude to M——," said Lord Colnbrook: "well, between ourselves, I think it is by far the most sensible manner of occupying his time; he is much more likely to make a figure as a tailor than as an author.

"How long has Mr. Wurst become a philologist?" demanded the Viscount.

"I addressed the same question to him," said Lord Colnbrook; "saying, yours will be the first goose who ever furnished its owner with a quill; I know our figures were much indebted to your scissors."

"In debt!" replied he, interrupting me; "Ach leider, Gott! Yes, dere is as many bad debts, my Lord, as dere is bad figures, in London; but dee goot she pay for dee bat in this vicket

vorlt, it is a rule mit our house; but den, as dee Teuful, she make dee bat pay for dee goot in t' oder blace, as Hamlet calls it: vy you see dere is a littel bit left to let out, as we say."

"But why could you not be contented with improving our persons, without attempting to interfere with our language?"

"Vy, vat I shall do?" said he: "Ven I gall him preeches, den my gustomers, vich is in de Bible-line, she tells me she is shockt mid my intecency; vell, if I call small-gloaths, dat sound so un-Cheltenham-like, man dink of a gountry barsin, mit a pair of visiting fustians, and twelve littel white-headed chiltren; vell den, so I and my voreman we dink and so we say, von, two, dree, and we call a goat a bremier; and a waisgoat a zecond; and a preeches a troisième."

"Confound the puppy!" said Lord Dorimont; "I suppose he christens a pair of drawers an *entresol*."

"I shall trust to you to set me right on these matters," returned Arthur, laughing; "the fact is," added he, casting a look at a leg, of which he had no reason to be ashamed,

"fashions change."—"And Colnbrook would give worlds if legs did also," observed Lord Dorimont, laughing.

"I beg your pardon, my dear Beverley," continued the Marquess, with the same indifference to the Viscount's attacks, "but those short troisièmes are, as I observed before, quite *rococo*,* almost indecent: in the first place, what nobleman or gentleman, in God's name, would have calves, excepting a Heyduc, or a foot-soldier? and in the next, if a man were cursed with such vulgar symptoms of robustness, who would expose them to the stings and pricks of gnats and flies, ladders, cold winds, rocks, and the thousand other shocks that flesh is heir to? besides, now-a-days, they are almost the only distinction between a gentleman and his footman. Egad! the thing is so notorious, that my valet gave me warning, because I insisted upon his never wearing trowsers—not mine, at least."

"Why, in truth," said Arthur, "I have lived so little in the world, and having been

* The present fashionable slang French word for every thing Gothic, or fantastic.

taught to consider my dress made for my body, and not my body made for my dress, that I have hitherto paid little attention to the subject."

"It is time to begin then, my dear Sir," rejoined the Marquess: "that sort of primeval indifference may be very appropriate for a shepherd who has nothing between heaven and his skin, save that of one of his goat's; or for a soldier, who, between his horrid regulations and tasteless Colonel, is sure to be made a fool of; but in the world it is very different—dress is a matter of vital importance, and we have the most illustrious precedents for it. Be assured also, that more men are blackballed at clubs from the sins of their tailors, than are admitted for their own merit; and as for matrimony, Staub and Stultz have done more in the way of providing younger brothers with heiresses, than all the sighing, beseeching, and sentimentality of Cupid's vocabulary, especially when they chance to have received a little assistance from Coulon."

"The real truth is," said Lord Dorimont, "that Colnbrook and a few others have con-

spired to bring about this species of tibial laxity to cover their own defects; but it is very hard that we, to whom nature has bountifully accorded well-proportioned limbs, should be condemned to conceal them, merely because they happen to have legs like Numidian cranes."

By a bold manœuvre of Lord Colnbrook's coachman, the carriage at this moment broke into the centre of the long string of equipages, which extended down the whole of South Audley Street; not, however, without the pole having played the part of a battering-ram on the hereditary coach of an old Baronet on the one side; whilst the hind-wheel pulled off the richly emblazoned armorial bearings of a newly-created peer's pert chariot on the other, amidst the cutting and lashing of a dozen whips, the snorting, plunging, and trampling of twice as many horses, the execrations of an equal number of coachmen and footmen, the screams of Mammas; the shouts of "Infamous!" "Take the name!" "Bow Street!" and "Just come from the coachmaker's" of papas; and the consolatory "O! never mind, it's a mere scratch!" from the daughters.

"I shall have to defend that rogue at Marlborough Street to-morrow," observed Lord Colnbrook, as, quietly letting down the front glass, he coolly said to his coachman, "if your polepin is loose, lift it over that flunkie's pug nose, and drop us in further on;" and then sitting down again, he added, "it will be about the fiftieth time that I have had to swear that my horses ran away; and that I should have discharged him, if he was not the steadiest man in the world, and a widower with ten children."

"I should scarcely think it worth while to seek so much trouble and expense for the sake of gaining a few minutes," observed Arthur; "unless, indeed, you have particular fancy for imitating the chargers of our ancestors in their war-chariots; a fellow of that kind must cost you more than he is worth."

"He is invaluable!" replied Lord Colnbrook. "I calculate that he saves me at least an hour every night; and, as we are told, that time saved, is money gained, he is a perfect treasure: besides, I hate my own reflections, they always breed blue devils; above all, do I abo-

minate sitting, for an hour or two, coquetting with my own face reflected in the hammercloth, now broad, now square, now an ell long, and, above all, as blue as if I had lived all my life on zinc patés."

"I thought you said Lady Atherley's party would be small," said Arthur, as they advanced nearer the door; "why, half London appears to be on the move; how are they all to find space?"

"Why, to judge by one's knowledge of London houses on the one hand, and the newspaper accounts of the numbers usually invited on the other, one might fairly suppose that every person that gave a party built apartments for the occasion," said Lord Dorimont; "for, in fact, with half a dozen exceptions, there is not a house in London calculated to contain a fourth part of the people usually invited."

"Oh! I do not imagine that we shall have above three hundred this evening," rejoined the Marquess; "and, as Atherley's rooms conveniently hold about two-thirds of that number, it will be the perfection of space and elbow-room, compared with the squeezes one is generally exposed to."

"I must say this for Lady Atherley," rejoined Lord Dorimont, "she shows considerable skill in persuading her husband to pay for her music-parties; though he loves money much more than he does her, and abhors music, even more than a bad dinner."

"She has the good taste also to persuade him, in the first place, that hot rooms are bad for digestion; and in the next, she endeavours to diminish the heat by offending half London; and by only inviting a few, does not convert her apartments into those horrid cloathes-presses so peculiar to our island, where one may think himself fortunate if he can obtain a *pied à terre* in the hall, with the very agreeable option of being either blown to a chilblain from the street, or singed to a cinder by the porter's fire."

"Which is quite as pleasant, in most cases, as being up-stairs; where, if it be a music-party, hearing is out of the question, save now and then when the shrill E of the sopranna rises tingling above the grumbling buz of the melting sufferers around."

"And when, if it be a ball," said Lord Dorimont, "seeing is equally hopeless; unless, in-

deed, one chooses to amuse himself, either by investigating the organ of philogenitiveness in the neck of some stumpy père de famille immediately before one, or in counting the vertebræ in the scraggy backs of his daughters; which, as I am neither a believer in phrenology, nor a student in anatomy, are by no means delectable methods of passing a portion of one's evening."

"As acquaintances are so cheap and extensive, and houses so small and dear," observed Arthur, "it is strange that party-givers do not divide their lists."

"That is often the case: but do what they will, divide, select, or amalgamate, the issue is equally unprofitable. If all are asked, every one complains of the crowd, the bore, and the heat; and, in no measured terms, all express their disgust, and 'this is the last time she will catch me at one of her bear-garden routs:' if divided, those who are invited to the first, invariably imagine that the second will be the best, and that the persons they particularly wished to meet are not present; whilst those who are reserved for the last, are extremely indignant at not having been selected for the first,

and either send excuses, or go with a determination to be out of humour with every thing."

"With the knowledge of all this before their eyes," said Beverley, "I wonder people put themselves to so much trouble and inconvenience; it is a great folly on their parts, and most unreasonable and ungrateful on the other."

"Who can expect to meet with sense, reason, or gratitude in London, between April and July?" said the Viscount; "or that those who have delighted one with their affability, unaffected good-humour, and open-heartedness in the country, shall receive you in the same manner in London? Strange to say, they no sooner respire the air of St. James's than, *presto*, a spell comes over them, and in the cold bows, coxcomic appearance, and dissolute pursuits of one sex, the affected manners and heartless frivolities of the other, one can scarcely recognize the men who, in the country, have won his esteem by their honourable sentiments, information, and friendly cordiality, or the women who have made an impression on your heart by their unassuming gentleness, tenderness, and good sense."

"It is one of those anomalies in the English character, which is so peculiarly national," said Arthur: "one never meets with that sort of thing on the Continent. The German Prince, who is *bouttonné* to the very throat in the *Residens*, does not relax a muscle when he retires to his *Rittergut* in the country."

"He is, at all events, consistent," observed Lord Colnbrook.

"Nor does the French peer, whose lively hospitality you may have shared on the banks of the Loire, stare at you on those of the Seine, as though he had never met you before; nor do his wife and daughters vie with each other in saying and doing the most impertinent things."

"The fact is," said Lord Dorimont, "although we are the people of all others whose efforts are the most constantly directed to the attainment of that ridiculous fashion, to whose arbitrary laws we are all slaves; yet we certainly are not naturally a well-bred nation—generally speaking, we are either in the extremes of coarse vulgarity, or coxcomic mannerism; in no country is the happy medium more rarely attained."

"That, perhaps, is the reason," replied the Marquess, "why it is the greatest possible compliment in England, to say of a man that he is a perfect gentleman; whilst it is but very negative praise on the Continent to observe of such a one, he is *un homme tout à fait comme il faut*—the French, and foreigners in general, possess the genius of politeness; we have merely the instinct of civility."

"But," said Beverley, "you must allow that in no part of the world is any thing to be found so superior, so absolutely *sui generis*, as a really well-bred and gentlemanly Englishman."

The carriage now arrived at Lady Atherley's door, and in the course of a few seconds Beverley had been presented to the fair hostess; and after a few minutes' conversation with her, once more found himself seated by Camilla in a corner of Lady Atherley's boudoir, where they were joined by a small party of fashionable persons.

CHAPTER IV.

"So, Mademoiselle Trillenheim has played you *faux bond*, my dear Lady Atherley," said Lady Bertha; "can any thing be more provoking?"

"Nothing in the world," replied the hostess, with a half yawn, "excepting Lord Atherley's not having followed her example."

"If report speaks true," rejoined Lord Dorimont, "that would be a phenomenon hitherto unheard-of in natural history, except in the case of Jupiter."

"I do not think Lord Atherley's brain ever could produce any thing but a bill of fare," rejoined his amiable wife; "but do tell me what is all this scandalous story about the Trillenheims; I never had much faith, I must confess, either in her voice or virtue."

"The world is most abominably scandalous," said the Baron von Spritzenrauch, a diplomatist, who had just arrived from Germany, with a large pair of mustaches, and the reputation of being an admirable waltzer, and *homme à bonnes fortunes*: "rely upon it," continued he, smirking as if he wished to be disbelieved, "all you hear against her is the result of envy and calumny."

"Of that there can be no doubt," returned Lord Colnbrook, "if your opinion of her, and her cruelty to you, be taken as criterions; indeed, if we were to judge of the whole sex by the same standard, the vulture of Scandal might perish for want of aliment, and the Society for the Suppression of Vice would have a perfect sinecure."

"Let what will happen to her," observed the Duke of Ulsdale, "there will be considerable difficulty to persuade your honest countrymen, Baron, that she is not purity itself, an emanation of Venus, Diana, Terpsichore, and the Graces; in their opinion, the very altar of Virtue's temple is not sufficiently pure to receive

the oblations which they would offer at her shrine."

"In despite of all your exaggerated sentiment, and almost mystic exaltation," said the celebrated Madame de S——, who had joined the party, "your German enthusiasm is not easily aroused, but—"

"But," said the Baron, interrupting her, "when it is, it then bursts forth like the overwhelming torrent of a volcano; it is irresistible, and only perishes when the cause which gave it birth no longer exists; alike in love or battle, the effects are similar."

"I should rather," rejoined the lady," compare it to the morbid fire of some subterraneous conflagration, which obscurely burns and corrodes within the bowels of the earth, without either enlightening by the purity of its flame, invigorating with its heat, or astonishing by the brilliancy of its corruscations. Your adoration, often the offspring of ideality, fostered in solitude, and adhered to with Indian tenacity, too often terminates by consuming the worshipper without benefiting the divinity."

"It is singular enough," said the Duke of Ulsdale, "to compare the different modes in which different nations are accustomed to express their admiration for particular objects, especially for persons in Mademoiselle Trillenheim's profession."

"In no country is the merit of an artist more judiciously appreciated than with us," said the Baron; "our admiration is not the result of fashionable caprice, as with you, Duke, in England, nor the effect of that fickle love of novelty and want of reflection so peculiarly characteristic of a Parisian public: it is true, we are not hasty in our judgments, our approbation is not to be obtained without long and continued excellence; but when once established, no where is it more just, more constant, or more flattering; no where is individual merit more amply rewarded."

"I cannot exactly agree with you," rejoined the Duke; "for if a virtuoso happen to possess more than common merit, and more than ordinary virtue, you forthwith adorn her not only with every imaginary personal beauty, but with the unsullied attributes of every moral per-

fection; your sentimental enthusiasm knows no bounds, especially if she be your countrywoman. Then, indeed, pipes, coffee-cups, snuff-boxes, and *souvenirs*, retrace and multiply her image; inexperienced critics, who have never left the precincts of their own town, laud her to the skies; whilst others, with more usage of the world, withhold their criticisms, lest their journals should become unpopular. Sub-lieutenants sing bacchanalian couplets to her glory over the fumes of sour Moselle; half-starved theatre-poets, inspired by white beer, write sonnets to her praise; long-haired students, having quarrelled whether she be from Saxony, Prussia, or Bohemia, first run through the gamut of academical abuse, from the retractable '*sonderbar*' to the irretrievable '*dummer junger*,' and then proceed to fight a padded duel to her honour; but as for the reward you speak of, I fancy that she must content herself with a few bunches of 'Forget me not' on her name-day, an *abonnement suspendu* for her benefit, or an offer of marriage from some Maestro di capello as poor as his own compositions."

"In France," said Madame de S——, "we

are not wont to judge of the diapason of an artist's virtue by that of her voice, as with you in Germany, but more especially with you in England: taking it for granted that they are all, what in reality they all are, with the rarest exceptions, we take care that they shall keep within their proper sphere—we do not require positive demonstrations, as you do."

"I beg your pardon," said Lord Dorimont; "but you must remember that it is the peculiar nature of our constitution to consider all persons innocent until their guilt is proved: our laws may be severe and Draconic in many respects; but in this instance, at least, they are merciful, and the same rule is applicable to society."

"I think," replied the Baroness, "however admirable the general hypothesis may be, that you carry it too far in matters of this nature; as for us, we confine our admiration to the stage; it is the voice and grace, not the vice or virtue, we trouble ourselves about; we do not admire the woman the more because she is an artist, though we admire the artist more be-

cause she is a woman. We did not elevate her to a level with us, as with you in England, nor deify her as you do in Germany; though we may certainly applaud her with a degree of enthusiastic vivacity often, as you observed, frivolous and exaggerated, but always most flattering to a woman's vanity. Our men may incense her with all the ardour of the most refined and seductive gallantry, and our women may adopt her style of dress;—no mean compliment, let me tell you, in Paris—our pit may almost overwhelm with applause, and our boxes cast chaplets at her feet. But inspect these chaplets: you will find there the leaves of the myrtle and vine, but neither the blossoms of the lily nor the violet. She may, perhaps, vie with the Dauphin in giving her name to a *couleur*, or find herself god-mamma to combs, *barets*, perfumes, and *corsages;* she may else have it in her power to enjoy all the luxuries of a *petite maison* in the *quartier Feydeau*, but she must not aspire to become the mistress of an hotel in the Fauxbourg St. Germain."

Piqued at the attack made upon his country

by the Duke, Spritzenrauch now observed: "You English, my Lord, show your admiration in a manner less gallant, but certainly more substantial—guineas, not chaplets, mark the extent of your satisfaction; but you know you have not any real taste for music."

"When you see the first noblemen in the land paying her the attentions due only to royalty," said Lord Dorimont, "and giving her the place of honour at his table, in preference to all that is most distinguished and dignified in the land; when you hear of peers in sober earnest proposing for her hand, you surely cannot accuse us of lack of gallantry, though you certainly may very fairly of want of taste."

"And when one sees peeresses quarrelling who shall chaperon her here, or be honoured by her company there," added Lord Colnbrook; "and when one hears of the severest and most proud persons treating her as one of their own rank and worth—you would scarcely expect to see her commit such a practical satire upon the pure enthusiasm of her own country, or the absurd attentions of your fine ladies, as to run off

with your double bass, or kettle drummer," said Madame de S——, interrupting him.

"It is singular," observed the Duke, "that with all our prudence, good sense, and foresight, we should be more easily duped than any nation in the world."

"It is an amiable defect," replied the Baroness, "and must be attributed to that liberal hospitality and noble generosity which you practise in a manner so glorious to yourselves and country."

"Hospitality when exercised without discretion, and generosity lavished with profligate thoughtlessness, are no longer virtues," returned the Duke: "it matters not with us whether he be a prince, a savage, or a singer; we are equally absurd and extravagant in our reception of strangers. If the first arrive among us, all England becomes insane; he is *fêted*, worshipped, and pursued with that obtrusive vulgar curiosity and attention for which our men are remarkable; whilst our women almost forget the *retenue* and delicacy of their sex, in their eagerness to obtain a word, a look a smile, or a *tour de waltz;* yet no sooner does

he quit our shores, than to our shame we discover that we have harboured a treacherous assassin, whose odious name will descend to posterity amidst the execrations and curses of European nations.—If," continued his Grace, "it be a savage who comes to pay us a visit, we kill the poor creature with porter, stays, and pantomime; if it be a singer, whatever her real character, she becomes the companion of our wives and daughters, and is courted by all classes with an inconceivable degree of servility and attention, and, above all, is paid until her own cupidity shrinks back astounded at the immensity of her own demands, as well as at the lavish and criminal prodigality of John Bull, whom she quits as soon as she can, laughing at his weakness, and thankless for his kindness."

"But your Grace must recollect," said the Baron, "how much an artist risks with your dreadful fogs—your climate."

"True," rejoined the Duke; "that reminds me of something which corroborates your observation. When I was last at Paris, I met at the Italians, V——, the husband of Madame C——

the singer, and in reply to the usual questions of her health, was told—'Very bad, she has suffered dreadfully,—elle vient ces jours-ci de perdre deux demi-notes de sa voix!' 'Un rhume, un refroidissement,' said I. 'Pardonnez-moi,' replied he, 'nous devons ce malheur entièrement à votre climat.' 'Very probably,' said I, 'for it is more than five years since you left it.'—Upon another occasion, I was walking up the Boulevard and met A——, the dancer, limping; 'Ah! bon jour, comme vous boitez; une entorse, un faux pas,' said I. 'Ah! mon Dieu que non,' retorted he; 'c'est une espèce de chose, comment l'appellez vous, de—de foiblesse de jarret, et mes médecins m'assurent que je la dois entièrement à l' humidité de votre climat.'"

"There is that good-natured, foolish woman Mrs. Prague, with her foot as usual stuck out, like the sign over a boot-maker's shop," said Lord Colnbrook. "I must go and say a word or two, for she gives a masked ball next month," said Lady Bertha, as she pointed towards a lady who stood in one of the door-ways with her back turned towards the party, her petti-

coats unusually short, her shoulders bare, her hair *à la Ninon*, and her whole costume utterly preposterous in a woman who had passed her tenth lustre.

"Who may that be?" demanded Arthur; "she appears, at this distance, to be a young person."

"She is a very innocent old fool, with a very admirable new cook," retorted the Marquess, "and if you like, you shall try him to-morrow."

"I must, at all events, be invited by her first," rejoined Arthur.

"Nothing more easy: come with me, and if you are presented, putting his abilities to the test, you shall at least have a specimen of hers;" and so saying, he took Beverley under his arm, and approaching quietly behind Mrs. Prague, whispered audibly in her ear,—"What! the beautiful Camilla alone,—not one worshipper offering incense at her shrine?"

"La! my dear Lord, how you frightened me; I'm not Miss Grantham," rejoined the lady, turning round, and showing a face whose contrast with her dress excited in Ar-

thur an inclination to laugh in the most painful degree.

"Good God! I beg you a thousand pardons," rejoined the Marquess, "now you speak, I see my mistake."

"Oh! I am not in the least angry," returned the lady, simpering; "dear me! it is very funny nobody but Mr. Prague takes me for myself, —but the resemblance must be very great, for you, who are so intimate with the Granthams, to be deceived."

"A s'y méprendre a thousand times," said the Marquess, "unless indeed one looks first at your foot, and then there is no possibility of mistaking Mrs. Prague—See! my friend Beverley cannot believe his own eyes."

"I really am thunderstruck," responded Arthur, who in the mean time had been introduced; "but my long absence from England must plead excuse for my want of discrimination."

"What a very gentlemanly, agreeable man your friend appears to be," said Mrs. Prague aside to the Marquess; and then almost to Arthur, "in order that you may know me better,

will you dine with us on Friday,—quite a small party,—merely a Prince, and the Duke of York, and a few other particular friends?—La! by the bye, talking of that, what does your Lordship think of my costume?"

"It is perfection," replied the Peer; "perhaps a little too antiquated for you."

"Oh you must like it, though perhaps it does make one look a little old. It is the same I wore at the fancy ball at Carlton House, and H. R. H. said that I put him wonderfully in mind of the celebrated Ninon de l'Enclos;" which latter word she pronounced so as to justify Lord Colnbrook's saying, "Thank God! you do not wear them!—to hide that foot would be a cruel act of selfishness;" and then walking off with Beverley, he exclaimed, "That at all events is a proof, that l'art de plaire est l'art de tromper."

"Ah! there comes Donna Maestosa," said Lady Atherley. "I wonder whether it is her gracious pleasure to sit or stand, to fill a whole divan, or block up a whole door-way,—she moves along with the air of one who expects the whole room to rise and make a cir-

cle for her:—it's an absolute nuisance being obliged to ask her; but if I did not, I might bid adieu to Carlton House for ever," added her Ladyship, as she hastened to receive a tall and still splendidly handsome woman, no longer however in the meridian of life, who, with an air of unaffected dignity, or rather natural grace and superiority, advanced towards her.

"Confound your good-nature," said Lord Dorimont; "why there is more intrinsic merit in one drop of her blood, than flows in all the veins and arteries of the whole Atherley race united."

"Who is it?" demanded Arthur.

"The celebrated Lady Kenilworth," replied the Viscount, "and a more amiable, or more virtuous woman never filled the perilous and ungrateful situation in which common report places her."

"Her Ladyship enjoys, throughout Europe, the reputation of exercising the influence she possesses, with a degree of moderation, tact, impartiality, and disinterestedness, as rare as it is laudable," observed Madame de S——, who had been attracted by the name.

"Never did any woman in a similar position," rejoined Lord Dorimont, "give her opinions with more candour, firmness, and integrity, nor more invariably abstain from all Court cabals, or political intrigues; never did any one, with equal opportunities of perpetrating evil, more constantly perform acts of generous kindness; never had the poor and oppressed a more zealous, disinterested advocate, or the corrupt and vicious a more determined foe. Far above all mercenary and selfish considerations, if she does ever interfere, or attempt to avail herself of her power, it is not to promote corruption, or to cast a veil over that flagitious system of peculation and nepotism which is the bane of Courts, and the only object of courtiers in general, but to point out those venal abuses and flagrant malversations, which those who generally surround the great are the last to disclose; but when discovered, are the first to cast the odium upon the shoulders of the generous master who was most probably unconscious of their existence."

"Your eulogium increases both my curiosity to see her Ladyship, and my anxiety to

have the honour of being acquainted with her," said the Baroness, who, in despite of her republican principles, was always ready to incense those in power.

"Did you never see her, Madam?" demanded Lord Colnbrook.

"No, I have not yet had that honour," was the reply.

"Then, if you will permit," rejoined his Lordship, "I shall have great pleasure in presenting you;" and then offering his arm to the celebrated stranger, to the utter astonishment of every one present, he led her up to Lady Hawksbell, who came rolling towards them. "Allow me," said he to the Marchioness, "to present the most illustrious woman of France to the most charming lady of England;" and then whispering in her ear, he added, "It is Madame de S——; you may talk to her about Buonaparté, the Revolution, suicide, and Germany."

Utterly unconscious of the mystification, Madame de S—— started back with astonishment, when, instead of the noble and graceful personage she had anticipated, she saw an indi-

vidual who must have reminded her most wonderfully of the Parisian Halles: quickly recovering herself, with the tact of a perfect woman of the world, she said, in French, "My Lady must forgive me, if the unexpected honour of being presented to a person of your exalted character, whose wit, virtues, and beauty, are so universally acknowledged, and so justly celebrated, has excited some emotion in my heart. To enjoy the friendship and favour of the most accomplished and most generous Prince in Europe, is already an enviable fate; but to combine with this the love and respect of the most free and magnanimous nation of the universe, is a glorious destiny, reserved perhaps for you alone."

Although this triple compliment, intended for the Prince, the nation, and Lady Kenilworth, was partly understood, and entirely taken to herself by Lady Hawksbell, yet she was not sufficient mistress of French to be able to reply in that language; and not being aware that Madame de S—— spoke our language with fluency, she first stammered out—"O dear! I can't parlez-vous; Lord-a-mercy, Ma'am!

you 're uncommonly polite! How did you leave Buonaparté? I hope he won't come over here; if he does, the Volunteers will give him a Rowland for his Oliver.—Dear me! we don't believe a word, Ma'am, about Captain Wright's having committed *felo-de-se*. But, dear me! as I said, I do not speak your language, and Hawky is not here to interpret—Ah! there he is, a philandering! I 'll go and fetch him; and in the mean time," said she to Lord Colnbrook, as she gave a hint about parties, "you may invite her to the Villa; and, by the bye, as she knows all about Germany, just ask her where is the best place to get Westphalia hams;" and off she went, to the no small amazement of Madame de S——, who, whatever she might have thought, merely said, "All the originality of genius—a little *brusque*, it is true; but I like that species of *sans gêne* so characteristic of your national independence;—she is, I see, of those characters which require to be deeply studied, ere one discovers their virtues, as the richest ores are concealed beneath the coarsest conglomerations."

"Or rather, as Lord Atherley would say, like

the fragrant pearls of the kitchen,—the modest, unobtrusive, self-retiring truffle, which, like her Ladyship, n'est pas du goût de tout le monde."

"I had imagined that you disdained all gastronomic frivolities," said Madame de S—— smiling, and quite as ready to enter into a discussion upon the most trivial subject, as she was capable of digesting the most abstruse. "What, do you really like truffles, or is it mere fashion?"

"A la folie," returned the Peer; "there's Atherley, who never passed through Mantes without envying even the very turkeys, whose happy destiny it is most probably to be stuffed with them."

The different personages now began to retire from the rooms, and Arthur, having replied affirmatively to Lady Bertha's question of—"Can I be of any use to you?" was, ere many minutes, landed in Portman Square.

CHAPTER V.

THE express forwarded to Lord and Lady Roxmere, announcing the safe arrival of their grandson, reached Brighton in the course of the same night, and before day-break on the following morning, the good and noble couple were already on their route to London, their minds agitated by all those tremulous, anxious emotions of hope, curiosity, and tenderness, which parents' hearts alone can feel at the immediate prospect of being reunited, after a separation of many years, to an only and beloved child.

"I wonder if we shall find him altered? I allude not to his person,—that is a consideration of minor importance;—but is he still the same upright, noble-minded, generous creature, whose

early dawn bespoke a meridian of such exceeding promise? Is he, think you, contaminated by the fulsome flatteries and venal adulations of those mean sycophants, who, taking advantage of the unsuspecting confidence and thoughtlessness of youth, are always ready to mislead and pervert them? or does he still cherish those admirable precepts which you, my dear, so successfully laboured to engraft upon his mind?" said the Earl, as he pressed the hand of his amiable partner, with all the grateful affection and gallantry of a youthful lover.

"Is he not a Beverley? Can you doubt it?" rejoined the Countess, a ray of pride animating her benevolent features, as she returned the pressure of her noble husband's hand.

"Does he still love his old relatives with the same disinterested affection, or, hardened by the selfish maxims and dissolute examples of profligate courtiers and companions, does he not regard us, perhaps, as the only impediments to the immediate enjoyment of those riches and titles, which he knows that he is born to inherit?—Will he," proceeded the Earl with solemnity, "continue fondly to cherish our

memory when we are no more, and still cling, with filial reverence and attachment, to the grey turrets beneath whose walls repose the bones of so many generations of his predecessors? Will he consider the wide domains which are the records of valour, the merit and prudence of his forefathers, as a holy trust confided to his charge for the benefit of his children and their successors, or like others, whom it were easy to name, after a short career of profligacy and extravagance, disgraceful to his family and dishonourable to human nature, will he abandon the venerable halls and fruitful lands of his progenitors to the vile grasp of some mercenary attorney, or to the purse-proud possession of some low-born Crœsus of the day?"

"Away, my dear Lord! away with such thoughts, unworthy of a Beverley!" replied the Countess. "No—his principles, his education, the blood which flows in his veins,—above all, your example, are sufficient guarantees that his name will never form an inglorious exception to those of his race; of that I entertain neither doubt nor apprehension. No—if any lurking suspicion or disquietude does intervene

to diminish my gratitude to Providence, for permitting me the happiness of again clasping him to my heart before I descend to the tomb, it is a secret presentiment that his feelings towards Lucy are no longer what they were, or at least not such as are calculated to terminate in the realization of our wishes."

"Whence do your surmises originate?" demanded the Earl, interrupting her. "What cause have you to doubt his constancy?"

"The gradual and increasing coolness with which he progressively alluded to her name in his letters, at first attracted my notice, though I attributed this to the natural consequence of long absence, and to my own strict injunctions; but latterly he has not only omitted even the common remembrances of civility and friendship, but in one of his last letters he says, in terms the most formal and indifferent, that it gives him much pleasure to hear that she is on the eve of concluding a marriage which promises so much happiness."

"Jealousy, mere jealousy!" rejoined the Earl; "rely upon it that he is piqued at the reports of her marriage; but as soon as he sees her

again, his affections will be rekindled and show themselves, as the blossoms of the convolvulus expand before the beams of the mid-day sun; at all events," continued his Lordship, "should he indeed be changed,—should he fail to realize the fond wishes we have so long entertained, we must console ourselves with the conviction, that there are many other young women whose virtues are not less eminent than those of our young friend, and who are equally calculated to ensure his happiness and do honour to his name."

"I almost regret," said Lady Roxmere, "that I did not permit him to correspond, or at least to have declared himself before his departure; that, at least, would have kept the flame alive, and perhaps have prevented his thoughts from wandering in any other direction."

"It is a matter of consolation, on the contrary, to me," rejoined the Earl, "that through your prudent foresight the young people were prevented from binding themselves in any engagement, which, although it might have enchained their liberties, could not have influenced the movements of their hearts, though it might

have compromised their happiness for ever. Let us, however, hope for the best, and as Delmore is completely recovered, Lucy must return to us directly, and we shall then be better enabled to judge of the matter."

"Poor girl!" replied Lady Roxmere; "before we expose her to the mortification which must ensue if my surmises are correct, we ought, I think, to ascertain the truth."

"I am of a different opinion," rejoined the Earl: "if your suspicions are without foundation, the sooner they meet the better; if the reverse, it will also have its advantage for Lucy, and may induce her to listen to the proposals of Sir John Cumber, who, though not a brilliant young man, is, I believe, well-disposed and good-tempered, and, independent of his fortune, well calculated to make any reasonable woman happy."

"I will certainly do as you desire," answered the Countess; "but, from my knowledge of Lucy's character, I fear the shock will almost prove fatal. It is not at my time of life that one is inclined to cherish exaggerated or romantic themes; but rely upon it that no inconstancy,

no ill usage, will ever drive her to give her hand where it would not be possible for her to accompany it with her heart, let the allurements of rank and fortune be ten thousand times more advantageous than those to which you allude."

"During this time, Arthur, whose anxiety to embrace his aged relatives exceeded, if possible, their impatience to reach London, continued watching with almost feverish impatience every equipage, or listening with a throbbing heart to the rattling of every wheel which entered the Square; at length, however, his suspense was put an end to, by the sight of four posters, which dashed at a gallop round the angle of the opposite street, and in a moment he recognized the liveries and carriage of his grandfather. With all the open-hearted and generous eagerness of youth, ere its natural ebullitions are enchained by the absurd restrictions and cold formalities of worldly etiquette, Beverley sprung out of the room, cleared the flight of stone stairs at a couple of bounds, and, unmindful of the surprised stare of the passers-by, rushed into the street, and before the servants could come to his assistance, in-

deed, before the Countess had time to alight from her carriage, he clasped her to his heart, and bore her, overcome with emotion, into the house; where I shall leave them to the indulgence of each other's society, whilst I proceed for a while to Beverley Vicarage.

As the period of Arthur's return approached, Lucy's doubts, anxiety, and agitation, grew every hour more intense, and her mind became harassed by a thousand contradictory fears and emotions, which she vainly endeavoured to conceal, not only from Lady Roxmere, but even from her own parent. Indeed, such had been the state of her feelings for some months, that she was too happy to have it in her power to escape from public observation, by hastening to fulfil the filial obligations which demanded her presence in the country. At one moment her jealousies and alarm had been strongly excited by hearing of Beverley's uninterrupted correspondence with Lady Bertha; but then again her heart bounded with joy, and she taxed herself with ingratitude and want of confidence, when in reply to her question of "Is there not one word of remembrance for me?"

her young friend and confidante, Fanny Grantham, would say with amiable but misjudging kindness, "I will not increase your vanity, my dearest Lucy, by repeating all the pretty things he says of you:" though, in reality, Arthur had not once alluded to her name in the course of his epistle. In defiance, however, of fears, doubts, and jealousies, she clung to her attachment, and indulged in all the delicious speculations of her passion, with the confident abandonment and devoted tenderness of early, and, above all, of first love: whilst on his part, on the contrary, time, absence, the charms of the foreign beauties to whose fascinations he was exposed, the thousand changes and distractions incidental to a soldier's wandering and eventful life, as well as the intrigues of a subtle and worldly woman, had combined to enfeeble her hold upon his heart. Their relative position was an admirable illustration of the immortal Byron's lines:—

"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'Tis woman's whole existence; man may range
The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart,
Sword, gown, gain glory, offer in exchange

"Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
And few there are whom these cannot estrange;—
Men have all these resources, we but one,—
To love again and be again undone."

With Lucy, every object, however minute or trivial, served to nourish the flame which burnt within her heart, whether in the solitude of her chamber, amidst the gaieties of the town, or the more tranquil occupations of the country. In London, the very void occasioned by his absence was wrought by her into a token of remembrance;—a dance, an expression, the form of a hat, a passage in a play, brought his image before her; whilst an air, nay a mere note would vibrate to her very heart's core, with an exquisite thrill amounting almost to agony. Independent of his being the subject of diurnal conversation with the Earl and Countess and their household, and consequently, of his name being incessantly recalled to her mind, there was a picture in the dining-room in Portman Square, on which she could not gaze without her eyes becoming filled with tears of tenderness, and her bosom

swelling, almost to suffocation, with admiration and pride. This picture, the composition of our most celebrated marine painter, represented Arthur, yet a stripling, dashing into the ocean from the bow of his grandfather's yacht during a violent gale of wind, and, amidst the acclamations and blessings of the Beverley population, bearing safely to the shore a drowning fisher-lad:—and what more certain recommendation can there be to a woman's affections, what more efficacious hold can a lover have upon the constancy of his mistress, than the display of humanity, courage, and self-devotion?

At Beverley these memorials were multiplied an hundred fold: there, every flower, every tree, each walk, each shell upon the strand, recalled him to her presence. Here were the picturesque views which they had sketched together; there the cottage, the blessings of whose inmates they had shared; there, in all their awful and terrific grandeur, were the dreadful breakers bursting over the fatal Shark's Jaw; here was the small chamber in the Vulture's Tower, in which were preserved his books, his

drawings, and his implements for study or amusement; there, in the long oaken gallery, amidst the grim files of mailed warriors, or brocaded dames of the family, stood the portrait of Arthur in all the bloom of youthful manliness, attired in the martial costume of the brave Highland regiment, in which he had been placed out of compliment to his mother's family, one of the most ancient of that kingdom.—In fact, almost every portion of the grounds or castle contained some remembrance of him, fondly cherished either by the noble owners or their domestics. Upon the door of that chamber were preserved with religious care the marks which denoted his progressive growth from a little rolling infant to a vigorous youth; in that apartment, more admired by the household than if they had been sketches from Claude, were exhibited his first attempts in the fine arts; whilst there, upon the costly carpets of the state rooms, three or four hounds and spaniels were permitted to enjoy themselves in uninterrupted happiness before the fires; and the good old Peer, as he stooped down to caress the lazy

animals, would apologize to his guests for their intrusion, by saying, "Poor brutes, I love them for my boy's sake; they were his favourites."

In the park, Arthur's little pony, in all the rough luxuriance of freedom, would, when he saw her, canter up, snort, strike the ground with his hoof, fling back his ears, neigh, and with averted head submit to the proffered caress; and then having received the mouthful of bread, his usual recompence, he would scamper off towards a group of worn-out elders of his species, who were allowed to lounge out the remainder of their days amidst the rich pasturage and shady foliage of the park.

Those who can appreciate the devoted and disinterested nature of women's hearts, will not be surprised if Lucy's suspense and anxiety increased to the utmost extent, when the period of Arthur's anticipated return had passed without his appearance being announced, and when from the delay in the arrival of the brig-of-war, (or death-ships, as these dangerous vessels are called by seamen,) in which he was known to have taken his passage, considerable fears were entertained for her

safety at the Admiralty. Lucy, undmindful of herself, lost every selfish consideration in her apprehension for his security: a few weeks previous, and she coveted no other earthly blessing than to be assured of his love; now she would gladly have renounced even that, to be convinced of his safety. Night after night, she would lie awake listening to the bellowing of the winds, or raging of the distant surges as they thundered on the shore, her heart trembling with responsive shuddering, as if each billow, whose awful roar re-echoed from the Shark's Jaw, had again overwhelmed the body of her lover, or as if each blast, which shook the casements, bore to her ears his dying groans. Her apprehensions were, however, at length terminated by the receipt of a letter from Lady Roxmere, announcing Arthur's safe arrival, and requesting her to return to town as soon as possible; a summons with which it may well be supposed she was not tardy in her compliance.

The attentions of Lord Colnbrook and Arthur to the two Miss Granthams on the evening of Lady Atherley's party, had been so

assiduous as to attract general observation. Several very particular, and, of course, dear friends of Lady Bertha's, who had been tearing her to pieces in the most unmerciful manner, for her mercenary system of intrigue, the unblushing effrontery with which she grasped at every young man of rank and fortune, and the insolence with which she behaved to those who were neither rich nor fashionable, now accosted and congratulated her, with a semblance of tender cordiality and heartfelt interest, wonderfully edifying to the bystanders, but fully appreciated by every personage to whom they were addressed.

As far as Lord Colnbrook was concerned, there certainly were just grounds for the observations of the world, that is to say, during the present season: he had been, it is true, on intimate terms with the family for three or four years; he was aware also that he had made a deep impression on the heart of Fanny, to whose virtues and beauties he was himself far from insensible; but he was too much engrossed by the pursuits of fashionable life, and the cultivation of *liaisons* of a less honour-

able nature, to permit him to think of marriage, —he had in fact been unable to renounce the pleasures of a young bachelor's life, in order to adopt the sober character of a respectable Benedick; his attentions had therefore been constant, but still not decided, and had in truth been nearly divided between the two sisters; but during the present season he had entirely devoted himself to Fanny; and in fact such were his assiduities, as to leave no doubt as to his intentions, unless indeed he behaved to her in such a manner as no man of honour and feeling could possibly be supposed capable of, still less a young man whose rank and prominent situation rendered it necessary for him to be circumspect and delicate in his conduct.

As to Arthur, although he had only been seen with Camilla during one evening, that was quite sufficient to attract the observation of the hawk's-eyed mamma, who no sooner discovered who he was, than like eagles perched on their eyries watching the lambs in the pastures beneath, they prepared to make their swoop, but upon seeing the prize guarded by such a formidable and vigilant shepherdess as Lady Bertha,

they renounced their attacks. Being deprived of the power of acting, they resolved to make amends for it by talking; and before twenty-four hours had elapsed, before Arthur was aware that he was known to twenty-four persons, all London was discussing the advantages, and, above all, the prosperity, and the "how much a year?" of his union with Camilla.

Such, indeed, appears to be the remarkable philanthropy with which people busy themselves with the domestic affairs of others in this best of all possible worlds, that even in the vast chaos of London society, where during three or four months, one has not time to think of oneself, each human being has sufficient leisure to occupy him or herself in carving out arrangements for the happiness of their neighbours, and in speculating for their worldly welfare with a degree of fervour and tenderness truly scriptural. It is vastly edifying to a lover of human nature, to witness the benevolent interest taken in these matters by all classes of persons, from the remote Goths and Huns of Bloomsbury Square, to the Arcadians of Wilton Place. It is very consolatory to hear how feel-

ingly Miss Fid, the conveyancer's daughter, or Mrs. Bumpton, the brewer's wife, laments Jane this's acceptance, or rejoices at Mary that's refusal, as if the Lady Janes and Lady Marys, whose names they deal so familiarly with, were their cousins, the denizens of a neighbouring shop, instead of being young women of rank with whom they can never hold earthly communication, and whom they have never seen except perhaps across the Opera House.

Lady Bertha, however, cared not for public opinion; and to carry her point, especially in the marriage of her eldest daughter, alone occupied her thoughts; indifferent as to the rest, by what means she attained her object, she did not pause to consult the hearts or inclinations of the girls,—her ambition was to see them form such brilliant connections as would at once establish them, if not above, at least on a level with the first; for, in her idea, there could be no merit without exalted birth,—no enjoyment of life without superabundant wealth,—no real felicity unless at the summit of fashion. Having secured all these advantages for her children,—having once placed the ball within their grasp,

it was their business to grasp it firmly; let them float or sink afterwards, she had done her duty as a provident mother,—the rest was their look out and that of their husbands. As to the mutual affections, or sympathies of our nature, she looked upon them as poisonous ingredients scattered through the human system, from whose influence it was our duty to protect ourselves; and as she had passed through life almost without being aware that Providence had gifted her with a heart, she could not understand what possible necessity there could be for so troublesome and antediluvian a companion. Her opinions on this head may perhaps be better understood from the following short dialogue between her and her daughters, which took place on the morning subsequent to Lady Atherley's party.

"Fanny," said her Ladyship, "Lord Colnbrook scarcely left your side for a single instant last night; did he propose?"

"No, Mamma; had he done so, I certainly should not have concealed it from you for a moment," replied the former, her face crimsoned with the deepest blushes, at this abrupt question.

"Well, then, I beg to say I have just received a letter from Mr. Maltby, who is the very model of perseverance and constancy; he again proposes, and says he shall be in town next month, and I give you fair warning, you must prepare to accept him, unless Lord Colnbrook chooses to declare himself in the mean time."

"Mr. Maltby!" exclaimed Fanny, with a kind of shudder; "I was in hopes that I should never have heard his name again."

"Yes, Mr. Maltby," rejoined the mamma, "and you are very ungrateful for not thanking me for having kept him in reserve,—however, I will not be fooled any longer; I have dragged you about quite long enough, it is time that you were both established,—you will soon become as stale and old as the hangings at the Opera:—by the bye, Fanny," continued Lady Bertha, "you looked as pale last night as the ghost of one of your old ball dresses; I wish you would put on rouge, paleness suits your sister's dark hair, it makes you a fright; and if you choose to amuse yourself with crying, I

must insist on your bathing your eyes with hot water before you go out."

"Can I suppress my tears, can I look cheerful, when the whole happiness of my future existence is at stake?" replied the daughter.

"What earthly reason was there for your falling in love with Lord Colnbrook?" retorted the mamma; "you had no business to give him such an immense advantage over you,—you might have been mistress of Colnbrook Castle had you played your cards well."

"Am I not perfectly happy at home?" said Fanny, though the tear which started to her eye betrayed a heart ill at ease; "why then should I wish to leave you? where can I expect to find that comfort, that ease and tranquillity elsewhere, which I enjoy beneath my father's roof? I am in no hurry to marry."

"I was in hopes, my dear," rejoined Lady Bertha, "that you had grown out of these romantic absurdities only worthy of clergymen's daughters:—think you," continued her Ladyship with increasing vehemence, "that I have expended such sums on your education, or that I, in despite of all opposition and your

father's vulgarity,—that I have succeeded in placing you at the head of the fashionable world,—think you that I have taught you to dress and dance better than any girls in London, merely to see you crumble away at my side in single uselessness?—were you not half insane with your nonsensical romance, you would acknowledge my kindness, for I certainly do not wish you to accept Mr. Maltby as long as there remains a chance of Lord Colnbrook; and if you conduct yourself with a little prudence, I think there will be no necessity for my informing Mr. Maltby that you accept him."—

"And with him eternal misery," returned Fanny, bursting into a flood of tears.

"Eternal trash and nonsense!" exclaimed her Ladyship, furious; "your intimacy with that canting Lucy Delmore has ruined your disposition; if you possess fortune, what can be wanting to your felicity?"

"Can fortune purchase peace of mind, can it heal the wounds of the heart?"

"It can purchase remedies for the one and substitutes for the other," retorted Lady Bertha; "pleasures and distractions abroad."

"But not domestic happiness at home," replied her daughter.

"Domestic happiness!" exclaimed the mamma: "What! a drowsy, bilious incubus, lolling himself to sleep after dinner, to the tune of 'Home, sweet home!' amidst a confused mixture of pap-spoons, grocers' bills, rusks, veal broth, double dummy whist, and oh! the abomination! flannel petticoats: but no more of this, I will neither be contradicted nor disobeyed: you know my intentions; and now go, and write an excuse to those horrid bores the Cornwalls, say we are all ill; and send down to Ebers' for a private box at Covent Garden; and by the bye, do tell Tape that your white satin hat is too *évasé*."

Happy to escape, Fanny now quitted the room, and Lady Bertha taking Camilla by the hand, and regarding her with a piercing look, said, "Do not suppose that you can deceive me, Camilla, or that I am so blind as you imagine."

"Deceit, Mamma! what can you mean?" rejoined Camilla, blushing, and hanging down her head in the utmost confusion.

"Do not add falsehood to treachery," re-

torted the mamma; "I know all that is going on between you and Sir Felix."

"Oh! indeed Mamma, it is only a little innocent flirtation—indeed, I do not care for him," said Camilla.

"You mean that he does not care for you; he is incapable of loving any thing except himself and his banker's acceptance," rejoined Lady Bertha; "but that matters not, you know I will not be trifled with; I shall forbid Sir Felix the house, unless you give me your solemn promise to put an end to these follies; if not, I will go down with you to the Grange immediately."

"If you positively desire it, I certainly will give it up," said Camilla, "and marry Mr. Beverley; but you know, Mamma, I do not care two-pence about him."

"I have heard quite enough this morning from your sister to vex me," rejoined Lady Bertha; "from you, Camilla, I did not expect such folly; but on this subject I will hear of no contradiction;" and so saying, her Ladyship quitted the room, leaving her daughter to her own reflections.

CHAPTER VI.

It was with sentiments of the utmost satisfaction that the Earl and Countess contemplated the great improvements perceptible in the manner and person of their grandson; it was above all, with the deepest emotions of parental pride, that they acknowledged the testimonials so flattering to his character as a gentleman and a soldier, which accompanied him to England—testimonials, whose value was enhanced by the gracious manner in which they were communicated by the lamented Prince then at the head of the army, whose generous heart, tempered in its workings by admirable firmness and rare impartiality, knew no greater happiness than in the performance of those acts of courtesy, justice, and benevolence, which so justly ob-

tained for him the appellation for the orphan's father, and the soldier's friend—appellations, humble it is true, but not less honourable to his memory than many of those lofty and imposing titles, which it is the herald's duty to proclaim at that last awful moment, when the grave is about to close for ever over the remains of the once puissant and illustrious dead.

One cause of vexation (arising, as may be imagined, from the destruction of their long cherished plans for the establishment of their grandson,) alone intervened to annoy Lord and Lady Roxmere, and upon this point their doubts had been speedily terminated by Arthur himself, who, with more candour than is usual on similar occasions, took an early opportunity to declare, that those possibilities which he had once denounced as utterly impossible, had all come to pass, even as Lady Roxmere had predicted; for he had not only ceased to consider Lucy in any other light than that of a sister, in whose welfare he should ever take the greatest interest, but that the place she once held in his heart was now engrossed by another, and that other he had avowed to be Camilla Grantham,

of whom he spoke in terms of the most rapturous enthusiasm. Although Lady Roxmere was in some measure prepared for the previous part of this confession, the latter intelligence was totally unexpected, and caused her as much surprise as regret, and the more so, since whatever might be the nature of her own opinions of Camilla,—opinions neither hastily nor injudiciously formed,—she had no fair, or at least no ostensible objections to oppose to her grandson's predilection for a young lady whose beauty was incontestible, whose moral disposition or amiable qualities she had no positive right to question, and who, in point of birth, education, and worldly consideration, was a fair and even eligible match for the first nobleman in England. She had availed herself of her privilege as a parent, to advise and dictate to her grandson, whilst he was yet a boy; and perhaps she owed the destruction of her best hopes and expectations to the too scrupulous precautions which she had then thought prudent to adopt, but to oppose her own surmises, (which, from being at total variance with the opinion of the world, would be attributed to unjust prejudice,)

or to offer any arguments in contradiction to the legitimate passion of a young man, who was now at an age, and had in fact a right to decide for himself, would be a hopeless and ungrateful undertaking, calculated to create distrust and disharmony between her and Arthur, without the slightest beneficial result: it was, therefore, with a heart replete with disappointment and vexation, that she proposed to receive into her family the only young woman in England, of whose principles she entertained serious doubts, and to whose alliance she felt any decided repugnance.

Several days elapsed after Beverley's return to England, ere Lucy was enabled to quit the country; this interval was passed by the former in the society of the Granthams, from whom he met with all that attention, and (what is called) encouragement, which is so well calculated to flatter the vanity, or captivate the sensibilities of a young man's heart. Parties of all kinds were made for him, particularly those small, nicely assorted, though dangerous parties, where each person invited (mothers as well as daughters) has an immediate interest in some other

individual present, and all are therefore too much occupied with their own "cases," to think of what is passing between their neighbours; in short, Lady Bertha and Camilla rivalled each other in fascination, and expressions of attachment; and whatever might have passed between Sir Felix and the latter, all seemed to be at an end; for the Knight ceased even to call in Brook-street, bowed with apparent coolness when he met them, and, as far as it was possible to judge by outward conduct, had entirely abandoned the field to his younger and more powerful rival.

The agitation of Miss Delmore's mind, which had been in some measure calmed by the receipt of Lady Roxmere's summons, was again excited to the utmost pitch as the moment approached which was to place her in the presence of that being who had obtained such absolute dominion over her soul. Plunged into that state of dizzy abstractedness, into which the mind is generally inclined to fall when one is travelling with rapidity, and to which the motion of the vehicle, the monotonous grating of the wheels, and swimming transition of the fleeting

landscape, as it vanishes on either side from one's sight, adds continual, and as it were narcotic aliment; Lucy's whole thoughts were absorbed by a succession of painful reveries, unbroken save by the sudden sigh which burst unbidden from her bosom, or by the sight of each succeeding mile-stone which denoted the diminished distance between her and the object of her affections. It was in vain, poor girl, that she attempted to shake off the gloom which bowed down her heart, as she advanced still further in her progress towards the metropolis;—it was without success that she courted brighter images, or attempted to resist the strange, unwelcome forebodings which oppressed her spirit,—forebodings, or rather friendly monitors, which Providence often awakens in our breasts to forewarn us of some latent misfortune, and which often so unaccountably, so suddenly overwhelm us, without any previous or connecting cause, without any apparent or ostensible foundation. To yield without a struggle to the controul of these mysterious sensations, would, Miss Delmore thought, be an act of weakness contrary to the principles of her religion, and incon-

sistent with the nobler functions of human reason; but to deny altogether their influence, or to contemn these impalpable, undefinable combinations of our system, as the mere offspring of a diseased imagination, or the empty delusions of mystic superstition, would, on the other hand, be to deny the secret agency of that soul, which is appointed our responsible inheritor in the life to come, and the eternal supporter of our chastisements or rewards when our mortal bodies shall long, long have moulded into dust.

So completely had Lucy been absorbed by her own reflections, that she had already passed through the Kensington gates ere she was aware of her near proximity to London; then indeed flattering herself that Arthur might ride out to meet her, she watched with feverish anxiety the approach of every horseman. More than once she started forward, feeling confident that she saw him, and even clung to the idea with breathless hope, until the uninteresting countenance of some common dancing acquaintance hatefully dissipated the illusion. One of these personages had persisted in cantering by the side of the

carriage, in despite of her annoyance and almost uncivil hints; and then, utterly unconscious of the torment he was inflicting, mentioned Beverley's return, talked of his incessant attentions to Camilla, and concluded by supposing that Lucy was come up to town to officiate as bridesmaid to her cousin, there being no doubt that Miss Grantham was forthwith to marry Mr. Beverley. If the shock of this intelligence had not been sufficient to overwhelm her, another circumstance occurred before she issued from the Park, which completed the measure of her suffering. Proceeding between Stanhope and Grosvenor-street gates, she saw a groom in the Roxmere livery with two saddle-horses, and she instantly recognized those which had been sent up from the castle in readiness for Arthur; it was evident therefore that he must be somewhere near: in despite of her agony, she strained her eyes to obtain a view of his beloved person; at last she saw him, it was but a glimpse, ere he was hid by the projecting buildings; her pulse beat violently, almost audibly; the carriage passed forwards; again she saw him, but she would rather have been struck with blindness; he was walking arm

in arm with Camilla, and alone ; and although the wheel of the carriage nearly grazed his elbow, —although she heard his voice, his very words, yet so absolutely absorbed was he by his attentions to his beautiful companion, that he did not even remark Lady Roxmere's chariot and four, much less its unhappy inmate, who hastily pulling down the silken blinds, buried her face in her handkerchief, and gave way to all the bitterness of her sufferings.

In the mean time Lady Roxmere, who had been anxiously awaiting the arrival of her young friend, no sooner heard the sound of the carriage, than hastening down stairs, she received Lucy with more than usual demonstrations of consideration and affection, instantly perceiving by the agitated, almost fainting state of the poor girl, that she was already in possession of the unwelcome intelligence so painful to them both. Overpowered by the intensity of her own anguish, not less than by the kindness of her aged friend, Lucy no sooner found herself in Lady Roxmere's boudoir, than throwing herself into her arms, she made a complete avowal of her attachment to Arthur, confessed that she had

fondly cherished the idea of their sentiments being mutual, and of the certainty of which she had at one time no reason to doubt: she spoke without disguise of her fears, her doubts, of all she had hoped and endured: she mentioned the intelligence communicated to her in the morning, corroborated in some measure by what she had herself witnessed in the Park; and concluded by earnestly imploring Lady Roxmere to permit her to fly from a house where the actual presence of the person who had destroyed her happiness for ever, would every moment of the day add fresh agony to her mind.

We shall not detail the dialogue which ensued; suffice it to say, that although it was impossible to disguise the truth, yet Lady Roxmere accompanied her communication with every expression of regret and sympathy, and with every demonstration of esteem and affection in her power; declaring without hesitation, as she tenderly embraced her fair protégée, that the same blow which had blighted the affections of Lucy's young days, had destroyed the fondest hopes and expectations of her own old age, and filled her heart with bitterness and disappointment:

then acquiescing in the propriety of Lucy's quitting London, the Countess fairly explained the Earl's motives for having subjected her to the pain of a meeting with Arthur, and suggested that, instead of returning immediately to Beverley, she should accompany a party of Lady Roxmere's friends who were about to proceed on a Northern tour.

If any thing could have consoled Lucy in her present state of mental distress, it would have been the goodness and sympathy evinced by her amiable friends; but at such moments, the patient is little inclined to listen to the dictates of reason, or to profit by the consolatory suggestions of affection: the burning wounds of the heart repel the balsam one would fain pour upon them, even as metals issuing red from the furnace cast back the drops of moisture with which they chance to come in contact.

The most painful trial for Miss Delmore's fortitude yet remained to be undergone, and this was her first meeting with Arthur: a few days past, and she had looked forward to this event with every emotion of delight; but now she would gladly have fled to the remotest corner of

the globe to avoid the sight of him, dear even as he was to her. It was therefore with sensations of inexpressible anguish that she listened to the tramp of every horse's hoof which echoed from the street, or hearkened to the reverberation of each knock which resounded on the door. At length he entered the hall; she distinguished the well-known accents of his voice, as he directed one of the servants to carry a magnificent bouquet of flowers with his compliments to Miss Grantham (and the very name sent an indescribable pang through her whole frame); she then heard him ask for herself, and then mount the staircase: each pulsation of her heart now responded to the sound of his footsteps, with a sensation as acute and palpable as if that very heart would have sprung from her bosom; a moment more and his hand was on the door, it opened, and he stood before her:—her limbs trembled violently, her lips quivered, and a miserable suffocating sensation deprived her for a few seconds of respiration, yet it was but the weakness of a moment. Summoning to her aid all that fortitude and presence of mind which the gentlest of the sexes often display under the most fearful and

trying emergencies (arising perhaps from that command over their passions, that control over their feelings which they are not only taught to study from their earliest years, but are required to exercise so frequently as they advance in life), Lucy rose to meet him with a degree of self-possession and firmness which even surprised Lady Roxmere: she replied with apparent calmness to his salutations and inquiries, and scarcely shrunk from the kiss of brotherly friendship which he imprinted on her cheek; though the momentary quiver of her frame, and a deadly paleness which spread itself over her countenance, bespoke all the agony she endured. This painful interview, which seemed an age of torment to Lucy, at length terminated by Arthur's retiring to prepare himself to join a party at the Granthams.

The sight of the beautiful and interesting creature whom he had just quitted, so different from the graceless being whom, in despite of his own recollections and Lady Roxmere's praises, he had been taught to expect, awoke strange contradictory sensations in Beverley's heart. He had gained some experience, he had

made some acquaintance with the human passions since his departure, but even had this been otherwise, he could not avoid remarking Lucy's agitation, which, in defiance of all her assumed firmness, told a tale that Beverley would have given the universe to have concealed from himself: yet whatever sensations might have passed across his heart, they were soon put to flight by the image of Camilla, and, above all, by the recollection that he had that very morning obtained Lady Bertha's formal consent to pay his addresses to her daughter.

During the few days which elapsed ere Lucy quitted London, she was spared the pain of frequent collision with Beverley, by his constant attendance in Brook-street, though her annoyance was increased rather than diminished, by two offers which were made to her during this period. The first was a renewal of his proposals by Sir John Cumber, which, in despite of his constancy and personal entreaties, backed by Lord and Lady Roxmere's persuasions, and her own mortified and wounded feelings (so often the cause of an opposite conclusion), she modestly but firmly declined.

The second was from a new suitor, and this no other than the elder Mr. Cornwall, whose mother and sisters had considerably altered their opinions and conduct towards Lucy, when they found she had the honour of being invited to the pavilion, and when they saw her name amongst the half-dozen select couples, quoted in the Morning Post accounts of fashionable dancers. The young Squire's offer, which came in the form of a letter, under cover of one from his mother to Lady Roxmere, met with a similar fate to that of the Baronet. I shall venture to transcribe this quaint document for the benefit of my readers.—"Most likely this letter will somewhat surprise you, Miss, especially as it comes from one who is not much of a quill driver, whatever he flatters himself he might do with the awkwardest team out of London; indeed, I did ask the Governor to take the reins a bit for me, but says he, 'you must work the coach yourself, Master Stephen, as you best know how she'll follow.' Seeing that writing is rather against the collar, like for me, mayhap you will ask, why I didn't speak before your last journey up—why, I had a mind fifty times,

but I couldn't skrew out a word for the life of me; bless you, I felt as queer as if the housekeeper had taken and slapped a pail of water over me: besides, Miss, I did think that the ground was occupied, and I hate a fellow who starts an opposition merely just to floor a proprietor, and run a parcel of poor dumb things off their legs.—But it is no use to stand shilly-shally, like a dandy dragsman at Hyde Park Corner; and may be, Miss, you won't be sorry if I trundle on a bit faster; so I'll just say at once, that my Governor thinks it 's time for me to pull up, and look out for a match; now I've seen some dozens, but there is not one among them all whom I feel that I could love as I do you, and there you have it slap.—So, if you think we are likely to step together, and will have me, say so, and I will try all my life to make the ground easy for you, as I am sure you will to make the coach run light for me. The Governor, though he is a little queerish at starting, goes as pert as can be when he is warm, and will book up pretty handsome; so, if you will excuse faults, and only say all 's right, please

God, there shall not be a Duchess in the land with a nicer turn-out, least-ways, I expect so."

Much as Lucy was desirous to quit town, she dreaded lest the fortitude which had hitherto supported her, should give way during her last interview with Beverley; but an accident spared her this anticipated pain, and made him as anxious as herself to avoid the embarassment of a final, or at least formal parting.

On the evening preceding her departure, Arthur, who had been walking until dusk with the Granthams, returned to dress for a ball: finding the porter on the steps before the house, he entered without noise, and mounting the staircase, silently traversed the suite of apartments conducting to Lady Roxmere's boudoir: upon reaching the door, he perceived Lucy sitting there alone; her back was turned towards him, but lights burned on the table, and her features were distinctly reflected in the opposite mirror. Unwilling to disturb her, and perhaps desirous to escape a *tête-à-tête*, he was about to withdraw, but a sensation of

curiosity and interest fixed him to the spot. He observed that she had been weeping, still wept, and that the tears fell rapidly upon the paper before her: he saw her draw from her bosom a black ribbon, (it was the same he had worn round his neck the night of his terrible adventure,) she gazed on it, kissed it, and then clasping her hand to her eyes, pressed her forehead with an effort of great internal agony, and then suddenly rising quitted the room, by a door which conducted into the adjoining corridor, forgetting the paper on which she had been writing.

Impelled by a sentiment of curiosity more powerful than himself, Arthur approached the table, and recognised an album, containing some of his own drawings. The book was open at one of these, which represented a Moorish cemetery, near Granada, with a distant view of the Alhambra's tower. Upon a tablet on one of the tombs, Lucy had traced the following translation from an Arabic distich: "If the angels of death had laid me here, and thou, Zayde, shouldst approach my tomb, my spirit would cry out with a loud voice, Welcome!

thrice welcome, O loved one!' and then in a whisper it would add, 'See! see what thy lovely eyes have done!' but I would not do this to reproach thee." Fearful of her returning, Arthur hastily retired, but with a feeling of grief and even remorse which he could not disguise from himself; for if any thing was wanting to confirm the notion of her sentiments towards him, these few simple words were more than sufficient. Strange contradiction of human nature! there was a moment when he felt that he could have followed her—thrown himself at her feet, and renouncing her rival, have declared that she was dear to him as ever;—but it was now too late, even had this intention been more than a momentary impulse, for he had formerly declared himself to Camilla during their evening's walk, and his object in seeking Lady Roxmere was to announce the intelligence to her.

Early on the following morning, Lucy was on her road to the North; and before the end of the same day, Lady Roxmere, as well as Lady Bertha, received a thousand congratulations upon the report of the marriage, which

the latter had taken good care to announce in all the fashionable journals, exclaiming as she read the paragraphs, "Dear me! it is quite wonderful how these sort of things get into the papers!"

CHAPTER VII.

FULLY occupied between his attendance on Camilla, and the necessary preparations for his approaching nuptials, every trace of Lucy Delmore was soon effaced from Arthur's mind. Not only did he himself endeavour to gratify, and indeed anticipate, each wish and inclination of his future bride, but Lord and Lady Roxmere determined to render the marriage of the young couple as brilliant as possible, as well as to make such substantial arrangements as would ensure their future comfort and splendour. Never had a more magnificent *corbeille* attracted the admiration of London gossips; *chi non ha veduto Roma* might have been applied to Camilla's *trousseau.* Present followed present, lace, trinkets, cachemeres of the most costly

description were added to the finest and most beautiful linens and cambrics of the Continent; in short, every thing that the most extravagant fancy could desire, that taste could devise, or unsparing wealth procure, were placed at her command; and if her gratitude had been in any way commensurate with the kindness and princely munificence of the noble pair into whose family she was about to enter, they could have had no reason to regret their liberality.

Gladly would Arthur have passed the period required by the solicitors for the usual legal arrangements, in retirement and in the society of Camilla, and their respective families; but this species of prologue to matrimony was in no way accordant with Miss Grantham's ideas of pleasure; in fact, she displayed so much disinclination to renounce a single gaiety or amusement, when the sacrifice was hinted at by Arthur, and evinced such peevishness and ill humour when Lady Bertha persisted in remaining at home, that Beverley was obliged to submit to follow her from party to ball, and from opera to concert, until the very eve of the day fixed for their nuptials; nay, indeed, she posi-

tively insisted on the ceremony being postponed for a week, in order that she might assist at a grand fête about to be given by the Duke of Ulsdale. "I see no earthly reason," said Camilla, in reply to Beverley's earnest solicitations and remonstrances, "why people should seclude themselves before their marriage, as if they were put up to fatten, or were about to take the veil; besides, I think it very unkind of you, to wish to prevent me from going to the Duke's, as I shall miss so many delightful balls and parties; and the best things, you know, are always given in June." What lover could resist such admirable arguments?

The Duke's fête, which excited such general expectation and anxiety in the great world, was to consist of a water party and ball, at his villa, on the banks of the Thames, and would, it was said, exceed in brilliancy and magnificence every thing of the kind which had before been given, even by his Grace himself. The Duke's villa at ——— was admirably adapted for the purpose of a fête champêtre.

"Hoc nemus, hi fontes, hæc textilis umbra supini
Palmitis, hoc riguæ ductile flumen aquæ,
Prataque."---

Its splendid flower gardens, and pleasure grounds; its shady groves, its temples, and *reposoirs;* its hanging rocks of red sandstone; the majestic richness of its timber, the variety of its prospects, its cool springs, which, oozing from amidst banks clothed with moss and lichens, either reposed in basons of more than crystal transparency, or darted brawling over fragments of stone and roots, to unite themselves with the noble stream which flowed sluggishly beneath; sluggishly, as if loth to quit a scene of such fair and tranquil beauty, which enchanted the eye without; whilst its noble apartments, fitted up with the utmost magnificence, combined all the advantages of an Italian villa, with the comforts and luxuries essential to a British climate and British habits, and proved, that if the hand of nature had dealt unsparingly its favours without, that of art, combined with the most consummate taste, had been employed within.

Confident in his own powers, and utterly indifferent whom he might offend,—that is to say, omit,—the Duke had no commiseration for the absent; his only care was to render his

parties agreeable to those present, and these comprised *all* who were invited; for no impediment save death, or broken limbs, ever produced an excuse. "Were my wife with one foot already in the grave, and Ulsdale were to issue invitations," said Lord Atherley, "I would offer him one of my boroughs for seven years, if he would postpone his party for as many weeks, for I believe that a card from him would set her again upon her legs, though all the physicians in London had abandoned her." Whether this was probable or not, I cannot vouch; but it did occur, to more than one heir who had long and ardently looked forward to the death of some near relative, to receive the announcement of the wished-for event a day or two before one of his Grace's fêtes; and though he did not actually deplore the loss of the defunct, yet he most cordially invoked any thing rather than charitable blessings on the inconsiderate bore, who after living to the age of Methuselah, solely to annoy him, had chosen to die at the only moment when the prolongation of his life for a short time might perhaps

have been convenient. The Duke not only evinced the utmost profusion and *savoir faire* in the arrangements for his fêtes, but he particularly displayed his despotic taste in the selection of his female guests, in whom beauty was an essential passport. Quite indifferent to the ordinary "first turn out" routine of family arrangements, he was determined to please himself alone; and to prevent all possibility of mistake, instead of inviting, as usual, the Ladies this, or the Misses that, he specified each person by her christian name, inviting one or more according as Venus or Hector had presided over their births; asking all, where all were pretty, and none where they were the reverse: indeed, he had it in contemplation, where the mothers were extremely ugly, to insert in a corner of the card the letters A. D. L. M! or in plain words, *au diable la maman!* instead of the accustomed R. S. V. P. By this means his Grace collected around him groups of beauties more fair than ever were selected for a Caliph's harem; but he overwhelmed with shame and vexation, and established as frights, (or plaintive, as the non-in-

vited were called,) a number of poor girls who had flattered themselves they might have crept into *la belle assemblée;* whilst he turned the heads, and filled with conceit and vanity the hearts of many others; but, worst of all, he sowed the seeds of jealousy and envy in families where the idea of personal rivalry had never before entered.

I will not exhaust the patience of my readers with a detailed account of the various amusements which distinguished this brilliant fête, though it would be impossible to pass them over in complete silence. As soon as the guests arrived, and had arranged their parties, they were conducted to the banks of the river, where a fleet of boats, decorated with the banners and pennons of the Duke's family, and their crews attired in the liveries and badges of his household, awaited to receive them. Thence cheered by the harmony of several vocal and instrumental bands stationed in the recesses of the rocks, or concealed amidst the foliage which clothed either bank, they floated down to a broader and less rapid part of the stream, where they were surprised by an exhibition (in imitation of a pa-

geant given by one of the Duke's ancestors to King Henry VIII.) representing a water joust between two hostile bands of Moors and Spaniards. On returning again to land, they were led to a temporary amphitheatre, in which several quadrilles of equestrians, they and their horses habited and caparisoned in the chivalrous costume of the fifteenth century, performed a carousal. To this succeeded a Spanish bull fight, divested however of its dangerous and disgusting accompaniments; since on the one hand the bull was secured, and his horns rendered innocuous, whilst on the other the Piccadores were directed not to inflict any wounds upon the majestic beast, who was however sufficiently irritated to exhibit all those symptoms of fury so admirably described by the Spanish romancers.

"Un toro en la plaza sueltan
De aspecto bravo y feroz,
Vista enojosa y soperbia,
Aricha nariz, certo cuello,
Cuerno ofensible, y piel negro
* * * * *
Grida el pueblo, brama el toro,
Brama, bufa, escarva, huele,
Anda al rededor, patea——"

These terminated, the company sauntered through the grounds, where at every turn some unexpected amusement surprised them. Towards the close of evening they were summoned to the banquet prepared in the mansion ; where instead of the party being crammed pêle-mêle, as is usually the case, at one or more interminable tables, and instead of the *comestibles* consisting, as is generally the case, of tepid fowls, thawing jellies, brown *blanc mangers*, jaundiced pines, and feverish wine, the first were distributed at several small tables not containing more than twelve persons each, whilst the latter absolutely defied even the hyper-critical taste of Lord Atherley, who returned home declaring that it was almost the only thing of the kind whence he had departed with any thing like a predisposition to indigestion. As the darkness closed in, a brilliant illumination, gradually creeping as it were out of the recesses of the woods, succeeded to the light of day : not only were the walks and grounds studded with innumerable Chinese lanterns, transparencies, and fire-brackets, but the huge stems and leading branches of the finest oaks and cedars were studded with co-

loured lamps, which minutely delineating their outlines, gave them all the appearances of a forest of fire created by some magic hand. Hitherto the river, which flowed at the distance of a few hundred feet beneath the terrace, had been wrapped in profound obscurity; suddenly, however, the sound of a cannon attracted the attention in that direction, and in a moment after, the stream was illuminated by a thousand blue lights and flaming cressets, and amidst continued discharges of rockets and musketry, the boats of a British cruiser were seen pulling towards the shore with the apparent intention of cutting out an enemy's vessel, supposed to be moored under the protection of the batteries; after an obstinate defence the assailants were seen to board and drive the enemy from the deck, the firing ceased, then gradually the lights were extinguished, and silence and obscurity again prevailed. After a short pause, a pale blue light flickered in the same direction; to this succeeded a broader flash; suddenly, and in a few seconds, bright flames burst forth from the captured vessel, which communicating to every part of her hull and rigging, she was quickly en-

veloped from stem to stern in one sheet of flame. Unable to carry off their prize, the victors had evidently resolved to destroy her: after effecting their purpose, they were seen slowly to row off, stand up, cheer, and in an instant more the vessel blew up with an awful explosion, whilst the air was filled with myriads of rockets, serpents, and fire balls,—in short, every species of combustible which the pyrotechnical art could invent. When sufficiently recovered from the effect of this scene, the party were summoned to the ball-room; not, however, without being first invited to pass through a kind of bazaar, where the ladies found every thing which they could possibly require in the shape of hair-dressers, shoes, ribbons, and all the ten thousand little et-ceteras which the gallant and magnificent host thought necessary to repair the female toilet, after having been some hours exposed to the air. It is not to be supposed, in the mean time, that Lady Bertha's good fortune in securing Beverley for one child, with every probability of uniting the other to Lord Colnbrook, could take place without exciting the utmost envy in the hearts of her numerous rivals.

Hitherto, however, none of the artifices so often adopted in London to interrupt matches, had been employed against Arthur, perhaps because he was not as yet in possession of rank, or because people were taken by surprise; besides, he had not yet formed any intimate connections with that set of women whose pernicious counsels are so ruinous to young men. With Lord Colnbrook it was far different; he had been assailed by every possible persuasion, cajolery, and raillery; not only was the cowardly and assassin-like system of anonymous communication adopted, but more than one woman of fashion fairly attacked him by letter, and amongst them, no one more virulently than Lady Atherley: her Ladyship had seized upon his arm when they embarked, and had not relinquished it when they returned to shore; enjoying beyond measure the annoyance she had given to Lady Bertha, and the evident distress she caused Fanny. "I declare," said her Ladyship, "your future mamma-in-law looked as fierce and ruffled, darting over the water, as a swan which had lost its cygnet."

"Gosling, I suppose you mean to say," replied Lord Colnbrook good humouredly.

"Goslings! where?" exclaimed Lord Atherley, who was close to them; "Goslings! why they must be as tough by this time as Michaelmas geese,—by the by, your saint is a sort of person who generally takes care to live well; so I 've no doubt Saint Michael always had his goose dressed *à la daube*.—Ah! poor Dumont, you will be regretted as long as there is a goose left in France!"

"And in England also, at least until I am a widow," whispered Lady Atherley to her companion.

"What an interesting speculation," continued the Peer, "for a philosophical ornithologist to compare the opposite destinies of the feathered tribe in different countries. If, as the worthy *la Regnière* observes, the Alsatian is consoled under his sufferings, and even glories in his martyrdom, when he recollects that he is to be buried in a pyramid of truffles, and conveyed to the farthest quarters of the globe, a dish worthy of kings, what must be the sense of torment and degradation of the English biped—how much must his misery be increased, when he reflects that he is to be stuffed with sage and onions,

and devoured only by footmen and porters? Good God! how immense is the distance between the sublimity of the one to the abject vulgarism of the other! It is the very Pathos and Bathos of culinary Taxidermy.—We are a strange people," proceeded the Epicure, "we look on with obdurate hearts at the sufferings of the pig, in his process of transmutation into brawn; and yet our eyes shed tears when we think of the torments of the goose during his metamorphosis into a *paté*."

"Were the Continent open to us," observed Lord Colnbrook gravely, "I have no doubt we should have a deputation of philanimalists proceeding to the assistance of the Strasburgh geese, armed with blue pills and Cheltenham water: by the by, I have often thought that your Governor-General must be an enviable man; for if the Indian climate affects the geese as it does the human species, their livers must be quite equal to any thing our neighbours can produce."

"Apropos of that," rejoined Lord Atherley, "I met with a book the other day, in which a supposed gourmand (and I believe the

rogue of an author means me; if so, it is a wicked libel) regales his guest with a *sauté de foie gras.* Now, Sir, although the man who dished up that work may understand the use of the goose quill, I am convinced that he has no idea of the various purposes to which one may apply the body of that interesting bird. A *sauté de foie gras!*" exclaimed the indignant gastronome, "as well might he have said a *béchamelle* of wild boar, a *vol au vent* of cavear, or a *soufflé* of black-pudding.—I have eaten," and the worthy nobleman's eyes began to close, his lips were protruded, and he chuckled with evident pleasure at sundry agreeable reminiscences,—"I have eaten your *cuisse d'oie de Languedoc confitte dans sa graisse aux petits pois*—an excellent *plat bourgeois;* I have discussed your *aiguillettes d'oie sauvage au sauce Robert,* at the table of that great man himself. Dumont, poor Dumont, was my cook; therefore I may say, that your *oie à la daube* is my own grandchild; I have eaten *des abatis,* or giblets as we call them, (there is something insupportably coarse and indigestible in that word) *aux navets, en fricassée, aux ognons, et aux choux,*

but a *sauté de foie gras!* never!—I repeat, Sir, the man who wrote that book may have some knowledge of the workings of the human heart, but he knows nothing of those of the stomach:—he may have a tolerably fair smattering of the *Propria quæ maribus*, and *As in presenti*, which one may denominate the soup and fish of the Latin Grammar; but he has not the most distant conception of the Syntax, Prosody, and irregular Verbs,—that is to say, of the *Entrées*, *Entremets*, and *Hors d'Œuvre* of a good dinner. —No!" continued his Lordship with increasing indignation, "he is the sort of man to go into Very's, and after poring over the *carte*, cry out, 'Give me *any thing*, but don't forget boiled potatoes.'" The greater portion of these valuable observations was thrown away on Lord Colnbrook, who was occupied in attending to his fair companion.

"Did you send my last letter?" demanded her Ladyship.

"Certainly, and its contents have induced me to consider the subject more seriously than I had hitherto done," was the reply.

"Your word will bear a double interpretation," returned the lady.

"I should wish them to be understood in that sense, which I flatter myself would be the least disagreeable to you," answered the Marquess.

"Then, why do you continue your attentions to her, even to this very day?" retorted his companion.

"Consistently with decency, and without a breach of honour and friendship, I see not how to retract," returned the young nobleman.

"If you talk of honour and decency," replied Lady Atherley, "you ought long since to have married, or withdrawn altogether; there is more cruelty in thus entangling a girl's affections, and lingering on from month to month, nay from year to year, preventing others from approaching her, than there would be in declaring off at once;—no, the fact is, you really ought to propose, or retire without further delay."

"The one would be unpleasant, and the other difficult," replied the Marquess, "though I will very fairly avow, that I cannot make

up my mind to the idea of marriage:—but how to avoid it?"

"A man of your rank and fortune need never be at a loss for a pretext,—he may do any thing with impunity, at all events where we poor women are concerned," returned the lady; "however vile and profligate your conduct, your characters do not suffer,—nay, strange to say, such is our weakness and folly, that the more *rouérie* and want of principle you display, the more we are often inclined to applaud and encourage you; but in the present instance, as you have neither compromised yourself by word nor writing, what can be more easy for you than to cut the matter short at once; be cool to her to-day, and do not speak to her to-morrow,—you will have no occasion for any subsequent explanation."

"What!" rejoined the Marquess, "expose the poor girl to the sarcasms of half London, and myself to the just accusation of dishonour and breach of friendship?"

Here Lady Atherley burst into a fit of laughter, adding significantly, "How long

have you been thus scrupulous of your own or your friends' honour? Come, come! you cannot deceive me: you know you are dying to get out of the scrape, but have not courage, you stand in such awe of Lady Bertha: we will christen your wedding, *le mariage par poltronérie:* now, with all your vanity, do you really flatter yourself, if a better *partie* should present itself, that you would not be discarded by Lady Bertha just as she dismissed Fanwell?"

"'Gad I should imagine that twenty Lady Berthas are unequal to dispel one Fanwell: it suits his purpose to make her believe that she has tricked and dismissed him;—besides, I can-confess, that I do hold myself a little more valuable in men's eyes than Sir Felix."

"And yet you have not the manliness to retreat, as he has done; you are like the lion entangled in the fowler's net, and must be indebted to me, the mouse, for giving you your liberty."

"All I fear is, that in breaking my bonds, you will break poor Fanny's heart," said Lord Colnbrook.

"You forget," retorted the lady, "how many

more will be broken if I do not:—good heavens!" continued her Ladyship, "have you considered the many sacrifices you must make?—at your age, to burthen yourself, not so much with a wife, (and in saying this, I substitute the singular for the plural,) but with the *gêne*, incessant trammels and domestic torments which are inseparable from the marriage state! will you, who can command every enjoyment of wealth, youth, and rank, dash from your lip the cup of pleasure ere yet you have more than tasted its sweets, to become a martyr to public observation, interference of relations, and the slave of a lack-a-daisical girl, who is no more fit to do honour to your name and station than one of your dairy-maids?—will you, the gay, the handsome, the dissipated, yet *recherché* Lord Colnbrook, with whom all the women are in love,—who may at any time select whom he pleases in England,—will you renounce your pleasures and sacrifice yourself, when you may purchase—— ?"

"Yes," said the Marquess, interrupting her, "I know that I can purchase the right of putting a ring on almost any woman's finger, but can I purchase their affections?—Now,

verily I do believe, that, in this instance, I am loved for myself; you may laugh, but my conviction is, were I to announce to Miss Grantham the loss of title, estate, all, all *fors l'honneur*, that it would increase rather than diminish her attachment."

"And that of her mamma also," said Lady Atherley, with a sneer, "who, to prove her disinterestedness, would direct her door to be shut in your face, whilst her daughter would follow her elder sister's example, and provide for herself elsewhere."

"I grant you, that the mother is as heartless, as the father is headless," replied Lord Colnbrook; "but you wrong the daughter,—she is a treasure."

"I never saw the man in my life, who did not say the same thing of the woman with whom he fancied himself in love," returned Lady Atherley, "though she were pennyless, and her *trousseau* all contained in a pocket-handkerchief. Who is there who is not amiable, disinterested, and excellent, in the eyes of a lover? So thinks your friend Mr. Beverley," added her Ladyship significantly; "but then

he is really in love, but yours is mere imagination,—in your heart you abhor the thoughts of matrimony: no, you have looked yourself into it, as a person who, by constant habit, has familiarized himself to the sight of some frightful object. Had you really loved her, she had been your wife long since—you have argued yourself into it."

"And am in a fair way of being talked out of it," returned Lord Colnbrook.

"I wish you were," replied the lady, "for I hate my friends to make themselves absurd; and yet it would be *impaysable* to see you married;—only fancy your billing and cooing together, like the doves on the brink of Adrian's vase! Oh! whenever I were out of spirits, I would come and laugh at you."

"I do not see any thing so very absurd, after all," replied Lord Colnbrook, piqued by her raillery, and feeling more inclined to agree with Lady Atherley than he chose to admit. "Supposing the same arguments had been used with Lord Atherley, to induce him not to marry you?"

"Then, very probably, I should not have found so great a goose elsewhere," coolly re-

plied the lady: "but the case is quite different; Atherley wanted a steady person to sit at the head of his table, and I wanted the head of a table to sit at, though I was utterly indifferent whether the person opposite to me possessed a head or not:—besides, we understood each other perfectly; I never stood higher in his estimation than his English cook, and he never mounted in mine so high as his last *marmiton:*—you will please also to remember, that there is some trifling difference between the daughter of an ancient Peer, and that of a ci-devant soap-boiler: Atherley's ancestors, who, he says, were all gourmands, may be astonished at my not attempting to rival Mrs. Glass; but they need not blush at my introducing a whole legion of cotton-spinners, and such low people into their old halls."

"Oh!" said Lord Colnbrook, ill-concealing the impression her words made upon him, "those absurd prejudices of birth, those distinctions of rank, that species of *Ahnenstolz* is quite out of character with the age we live in; were I to retract, it certainly would not be on that account; but the real fact is, I do feel that I am as yet

somewhat young to settle in life—there would be no harm waiting, perhaps, another year; the idea of having a quantity of great scape-grace sons poking me into my grave when I am scarcely out of my cradle, is quite disgusting; perhaps, as you say, I am not really in love."

"So then, you have the courage to submit to this kind of moral death, and although the means are within your reach, you have not energy to save yourself; I never heard of such a case of matrimonial felo-de-se.—But what is this?" said her Ladyship, as, stooping down, she picked up a richly embroidered handkerchief; "let us see who it belongs to, that you may have the opportunity of throwing it once more, ere you sink down into all the dismal, ineffective dulness of a Benedick."

"I should not then move from hence," rejoined the Marquess.

"Your Lordship is wonderfully gallant for a love-sick man," replied the lady, unfolding the cambric, from which fell a letter sealed, but without address. "What have we here?" continued she, examining the address. "'Camilla,' and Sir Felix's seal, too; I know it; a Cupid

endeavouring to remove a heart from an altar; the motto in Spanish, '*no hay fuerzas que valen.*' Dropped, evidently dropped before she had time to read it: we will save her the trouble.—Ah, ah! Mr. Beverley, poor Mr. Beverley!" said Lady Atherley, coolly breaking open the letter, and reading the following lines:—"'I write in haste, and in the utmost agony. Cruel! was it not enough to abandon me? why return the few trifling objects which were the *gages* of happier times? It has been the will of God to try me with manifold afflictions; I have been as it were a butt, singled out for the shafts of adverse fortune.'"—

"There never was so lucky a fellow in this world," observed Lord Colnbrook, smiling.—

"'I could have supported with fortitude the cruelest blows of fate, but this unmans me; and yet, divine Camilla, you say you do not love Beverley, and that, in marrying him, you yield only to the dictates of prudence, the commands of your mother, and the force of circumstances; and that you can never, (O blessed be the word!) never love any one but me; this thought alone supports me. Yes, I will learn

to conquer the emotions of my heart; duty, religion, your repose demand it,—I will fly from you, do all but forget you:—I will suffer in silence and in solitude; no one shall see the bitter tears I shed."—

"The discovery would puzzle a water witch," said Lord Colnbrook.—

"Your happiness, dearer to me than my life, shall be my guide, my hope, my only comfort —I will strive not to abhor my rival; nay more, if he ensure the felicity of my Camilla, I will learn to bless him. Of all the worthless pledges of our mutual affections, you say that you retain the pearls alone: you do not well: *Perlen bedeuten del Thränen*,* those which I am doomed to shed:—

Tu me rends tout, dis-tu: pourquoi
Par ces mots vouloir me surprendre?
Tu conserves encore à moi
Un cœur trop fidèle et trop tendre:
Mais il ne depend pas de toi,
Ingrat ami, de me le rendre.†

* Pearls denote tears.—Lessing.

† The author is indebted for this charming madrigal, to the muse of the Princess Constance de Salm, the thrice crowned authoress of Sappho.

In those lines, cruel! inspired by my own wretchedness, you read the history of my tortured heart. Adieu.—When the bridal chaplet is entwined around your brow, may the image of the miserable Infelix cast no shade across the morning of your happiness!—Adieu."

"Inspiration!" exclaimed Lady Atherley, bursting into a fit of laughter; "why he stole the verses from my scrap-book, and what renders it still more ludicrous, he has forgotten that they are written by, and not to a woman."

"And the sentimental play on his own name, what think you of that?" replied Lord Colnbrook, joining in the laugh; "now not one syllable of the letter is true, nor one spark of regret does he feel, unless it is at her not having returned his pearl."

"Were I the ill-disposed person that the world speaks of, here would be a fine occasion for displaying my mischievous propensities; but you, at all events, will bear testimony to my good nature," said Lady Atherley, tearing the letter into a thousand fragments; "were I to give this to Beverley, the marriage were at an end; but though I hate Lady Bertha, I dislike

the Roxmeres still more; and they would give worlds to see the match broken off even now: —they, you see, dread an alliance with such people, though you covet it."

"Do I?" said Lord Colnbrook: "you shall see that," as quitting her Ladyship he proceeded towards the mansion, where at the moment of his entering, Fanny leaning on Beverley's arm, was awaiting his arrival with a beating heart. On seeing him approach, her eyes lighted up with smiles and animation, the cloud which had overspread her countenance gave way to a beam of pleasure, and she prepared to chide him playfully for having thus deserted her during the previous part of the day. Camilla, in the mean time, was seated on an ottoman, surrounded by, and indeed flirting with several young men of fashion, to the no small vexation of Arthur, who stood gazing at her with a strange mixture of anger and fondness, admiration and jealousy: his attention was however suddenly recalled to Fanny, by feeling her arm tremble violently and her frame leaning upon him for support:—turning round, he saw her deadly pale, even to faintness,

and at the same moment he perceived Lord Colnbrook first pass close to her, with a cold, steady, indifferent stare; and then having seated himself near one of Lady Atherley's intimate friends, a notoriously dissipated woman, entered into conversation in a strain of almost affected mirth and levity.

No farther explanation of Fanny's sudden indisposition was necessary: quickly leading her into a more private apartment, and leaving her in the care of her sister, Beverley sought out Lady Bertha, and informed her of Fanny's indisposition, but not of its cause. The quick eye of the vigilant mother, however, was not long in penetrating its origin; she had anticipated something of the kind, from Lord Colnbrook's neglect during the morning, and her suspicion was corroborated almost immediately. Whether intentionally or not, his Lordship traversed the room in which they were seated, and, without noticing them, requested a lady not far distant to join his party at one of the dinner tables. Lady Bertha's mortification and distress was not much inferior to that of her daughter's, but she had too much command

over her feelings to betray the slightest symptom of what was passing in her mind,—nay she appeared, if possible, more than usually animated and gay during the rest of the evening. Whatever pains, however, she took to conceal her own vexation, the circumstance quickly transpired. Lord Colnbrook's attentions had been so assiduous, so exclusive; his supposed marriage had been the theme of such general conversation, it had excited so much envy and observation, that it was impossible this sudden and inexplicable rupture could pass unnoticed; in fact, ere the fête was half terminated, it was whispered about in every direction that his match with Fanny was off. Gladly would Lady Bertha (who for once did really feel for her daughter's situation) have ordered her carriage and proceeded home, but this was impossible; and had it been otherwise, their departure would only have served to betray her mortification to a host of enemies, already glorying in her defeat: poor Fanny was therefore obliged to remain until a late hour of the night, not only a witness to Lord Colnbrook's heartless conduct, but an object of ill-natured

sarcasm and satire to her numerous rivals. Resolving that the triumph of these individuals should at all events be divested of some portion of its glory, Lady Bertha skilfully seized upon the present moment, in some measure consoling herself by having secured Beverley, to work upon the wounded pride and mortified feelings of her daughter, urging her by every possible persuasion, argument, and entreaty, to listen to the addresses of Mr. Maltby; nor without ultimate success, for within a few days that gentleman arrived in town, and the double marriage of the two girls was announced officially to the world. Not a word in the meantime of explanation having been offered by Lord Colnbrook, none was demanded; pride, and delicacy forbade it. "No!" said Lady Bertha, in reply to her husband's and Arthur's declaration that they would call upon the young Marquess to account for his conduct—"No! if you merely rebuke him for his wanton and ungentlemanly proceeding, it will only add fresh aliment to his vanity, and be an acknowledg ment of ourvexation; whilst, if you demand of him more serious satisfaction, it will

expose the matter to the whole world, without in the slightest degree amending or even avenging the cut: the only punishment for a person who is capable of such unworthy conduct, is to treat him with consummate indifference and contempt—that will be a thousand times more galling to his feelings, than any wound you can inflict with a pistol;—besides, has not Fanny avenged herself by accepting Mr. Maltby?"

CHAPTER VIII.

BEVERLEY'S regret at the extraordinary behaviour of his noble friend was the more poignant, since he had not only looked forward, with extreme satisfaction, to an alliance as agreeable to himself as it was flattering to the family of his destined wife; but a painful suspicion, most unfavourable to Lady Bertha and her daughter, now arose in his mind:—something wrong on their part, something which they evidently thought fit to conceal from him, must, he feared, have occurred; for in what other way was it possible to account for a proceeding so utterly inconsistent with every principle of gentlemanly and honourable feeling, so cruel to the young lady, so insulting to her family, and, above all, so unworthy of the

Marquess's rank and station in life? These sentiments were nowise diminished by Fanny's subsequent determination to marry Maltby, who, of all men in England, was the last with whom Beverley desired to be brought into more immediate contact.

It must not be supposed that Maltby's situation, in regard to the Roxmere title, had any share in influencing Arthur's sentiments: as well might he have cherished animosity against a younger brother; but general report was so unfavourable to his character; and such was said to be his violence, utter want of feeling and vicious propensities, that not only Arthur, but every human being who heard of Fanny's resolution to accept him, loudly condemned Lady Bertha for having encouraged the match; and whilst they pitied her daughter, expressed their astonishment that any young girl, whose antipathy to a man had been publicly declared, and who was known to have rejected his proposals, with a degree of repugnance bordering on disgust, should thus suddenly change her mind, and, from motives of pique alone, consent to accept him, and this also with a perfect

knowledge of his disposition and character. Had any other individual persisted in marrying a woman, under circumstances so galling to the feelings and sensibilities of the heart, it would have created some surprise; but with a mind constituted like that of Maltby, it seemed quite natural, that every sentiment of delicacy and ordinary dignity should become subordinate to the gratification of his passions, or, perhaps, to the accomplishment of a long cherished hope of revenging himself for the mortification he had received at her hands.

Fresh obstacles of one kind or another seemed fated to impede Beverley's union, since, at the pressing solicitations of Lady Bertha, who was anxious that the nuptials of the two girls should take place the same day, it was again postponed for a fortnight. Although the impatient Beverley had yielded a most unwilling consent to any farther delay, Camilla consoled herself by the thoughts of not losing quite so many balls as she had anticipated, and also by reading the following paragraph in the "Court Circular."

"Preparations are making at the Queen's

palace for the reception of her Majesty and the Princesses, who intend honouring the grand review with their presence, previous to the Drawing-room, which her Majesty has signified her gracious intention to hold on Thursday, the 4th of June."

Though Camilla had been presented, this, in consequence of the King's illness, had not been the case with Fanny; and it was therefore determined that both girls should attend the Drawing-room, in despite of the latter's reluctance to exhibit herself in public so immediately before her marriage; more especially, after what had so recently occurred. As a battalion of Arthur's Highland regiment was amongst the number of troops ordered to take a share in the review, of course it was decided that a party should be made, and invited to breakfast in Brook Street, whence they would proceed together to Hounslow.

Amongst those guests were, of course, several persons with whom the reader is already acquainted: I shall consequently take the liberty of accompanying the vehicle, in which were

seated the Duke of Ulsdale, Lords Atherley and Rumford, and a foreign nobleman.

Scarcely had the cavalcade attained half the distance between London and Hounslow, ere the rapidity of their progress was impeded by the vast concourse of vehicles, which apparently extended, in one uninterrupted string, from the metropolis to the review ground.

"Your public conveyances are certainly admirable: what beautiful horses, what neatness, what elegance and perfect *ensemble;* and music also!—this is really carrying the luxury of locomotion to its utmost possible extent," said the foreigner, pointing to a vehicle, built in imitation of a stage-coach, its blinds closed, its harness, its pannels, and whole accompaniments caricaturing the peculiarities of our public carriages; whilst the driver, as well as several other young men seated on the roof, one of whom was playing the key bugle, were smothered in shawls and white great coats, and had evidently taken the worst species of stage-coachmen for their model in dress and imitation.

"That," replied the Duke, smiling, "is not a stage-coach, but the private equipage of one of our aristocratic body. You may well stare! fortunately for the honour of the Peerage, this is almost the only instance amongst us of a Peer not entrusting his proxy to his coachman."

"This example is, however, quite sufficient to make me feel heartily ashamed of the fellowship," said Lord Rumford, "and it confirms the truth of the lines—

'How arts improve in this auspicious age!
Peers mount the box, and horses mount the stage.'"

"Generally speaking," answered the Duke, "the exhibitors of these machines belong to that class of young men whom one never meets but when driving in the streets, riding in the Park, or rioting after half-price at the theatres."

"Who come," said Lord Rumford, "like swallows, God knows whence; and depart after a short season, like woodcocks, Heaven knows whither."

"Woodcocks!" exclaimed Lord Atherley: "libel not those interesting wanderers by such a comparison: no—were a vessel freighted with hundreds of such men, to be stranded on some

cannibal coast, your Heliogabolus among the Anthropophagi could scarcely furnish himself with a plat from the united brains of the whole party."

"Were any man of rank amongst us to amuse himself by an exhibition so derogatory to his birth and station in life," said the stranger, "he would be degraded even in the eyes of the lowest class, and shunned by those in his own sphere: we have had many examples of domestics assuming the dress, decorations, and titles of their masters; but I do not remember an instance of a nobleman whose ambition it was to be mistaken for the conductor of a diligence, or for his own valet."

"Except Don Juan," said Lord Rumford; "and since Mozart is out of vogue, he even is no precedent."

"It is not uncommon," said the Duke, "to see men eagerly coveting functions, even according to their own assertion, far beyond the compass of their intellect; or to meet with others who assume both rank and importance, to which they have no earthly claim; but it is a singular proof of mental perversion, when individuals of a higher class attempt to ape

the vices and defects of those in the meanest stations."

"With us," replied the Count, "the relations of such men would, for the honour of their family, endeavour to place some legal restrictions on their conduct."

"We have greater latitude here," rejoined the Viscount; "providing a man does not drive a hearse, or attempt to kill any one by way of loading it, he may drive every species of vehicle, from a mail-coach to a velocipede, without the least risk of losing his caste, or being declared *non compos* by twelve men, perhaps not much more sane than himself."

"What dismal dingy building have we there?" demanded the foreigner, pointing to Kew Palace: "it appears to possess all the dull melancholy of a Gothic prison, without any of the grandeur of a Baronial Castle."

"To judge by its position, and the volumes of black smoke which are rolling towards it from this side of the river, one might mistake it for some huge contrivance for smoking hams," said the epicurean Peer.

"It is a monument raised by the architect to

his own want of taste, and an incontestible proof of the profligate extravagance with which the public money is too often squandered away by our ministers," said the Duke; "and it adds one more to the long catalogue of monstrous edifices which are not only burthensome and disgraceful to the nation, but glaring libels on the very name of Palace, and utterly unfit for the residence of a Sovereign."

"In truth," rejoined the Count, "nothing surprised me more disagreeably, on my arrival in England, than the meanness and utter want of dignity peculiar to all your royal buildings, Windsor excepted; your St. James's, for instance, to which we foreigners naturally attach an idea of magnificence and splendour consistent with its historical and political celebrity, and commensurate with the enormous resources of your empire, is really too contemptible to bear the name of Palace."

"If the Parks are called the lungs of the metropolis," said Lord Rumford, "St. James's may fairly be denominated the wen, for a more unseemly object cannot be met with."

"The foreigner who hears of the vast wealth

of the country, the prodigious extent of metropolis, and, above all, the overwhelming influence of the Court of St. James's, must indeed be most pitifully disappointed," said the Duke, "when upon asking for the celebrated palace, and without this precaution he might ignorantly pass through it, he sees a squalid, misshapen mass of smoke-stained brick and mortar, which would disgrace the *Rath Haus* of a Flemish burgh; whilst the habitations of the King's sons cluster hand in hand with pot-houses around it, like unhealthy excrescences starting from the red nose of a dram-drinker."

"You have Hampton, Kensington, Buckingham, and other palaces," replied the Count, "the mere repairs of which must in a few days nearly equal the cost of a new building; why are not all these destroyed and their materials sold, or, at all events, why are they not given up to the members of the Royal Family, who are obliged to purchase their own abodes?"

"Because certain personages would then be deprived of the patronage they derive from parcelling out these buildings amongst their old aunts and connections, thus indirectly rendering

these persons pensioners on the State: were the apartments appropriated solely to distinguished officers and their widows, or attached to the Order of the Bath, then indeed there might be some apology for their preservation; but now, they are mere receptacles for scandal, cards, and intrigue, or at best, like some huge preserve of tame rabbits."

"Then I would destroy it root and branch," exclaimed Lord Atherley; "why, your *lapin de garenne*, dress him how you will, *à la polonoise*, *à l'espagnole*, *en gibelotte*, *en turban*, or *en papillotes*, is after all but a very insipid *pis aller;* but your tame fellows, who '*sentent le chou dont ils furent nourris*,' as Despreaux says, phui! as soon would I eat Lady Atherley's Angola cat."

"The time will come, I trust," said the Duke, "when the admirable taste of the illustrious individual destined to reign over us, will take these matters into his serious consideration, and then we may perhaps be able to boast of having at least one residence worthy of the ruler of this mighty empire; though, indeed, such is the profligate waste, carelessness, mismanagement, and vile system of jobbing, which cankers almost all

our public undertakings connected with the arts, whether in the erection of a palace, the purchase of a picture, or the arrangement of a library, that it will require all the wisdom and vigilance of the Prince to curb those into whose hands these matters are intrusted."

"But what does your House of Commons say to this?" demanded the Count.

"It says much," rejoined the Viscount, "and does little, save that by an immense majority it votes thousands to be squandered away in a manner disgraceful to the taste of the age, and often in direct contradiction to the purpose for which it was granted:—our streets, our parks, and our suburbs teem with an hundred proofs of the justness of my remarks."

The endless variety of equipages, flanked and intermixed with pedestrians and horsemen, which augmented in number as they approached the scene of action, drew forth exclamations of surprise from the stranger. The green plebeian tax-cart, with its fast-trotting cob, and loaded with its double row of merry tradesmen, was seen close following the almost exploded, aristocratic curricle, not, as now-a-days, with its "tiger"

perched in a species of coal-box behind, but attended in all the respectable formality of the olden time, by two outriders. A lean, panting animal, whose starting veins, expanded nostrils, and still animated eye, showed the goodness of its blood, whilst its reeking withers and hollow flanks proved the cruelty of its drivers, was next seen dragging a light machine filled with half a dozen men, in whose dress, caricaturing the fashion of the day, and in whose daring countenances and depraved expression, one recognised a band of London *divers* hastening down to exercise their calling under the very eyes of the numerous police. To these succeeded the stanhope of some Bloomsbury beau, who, half standing, half sitting, with body erect, elbows squared, and head a little inclined to the right, looked as important as though the reins of Government, instead of those of a buggy, were in his hands; whilst by the rattling of his loosened wheel boxes, and the clinking of a piece of chain dangling at his horse's collar, he flattered himself that he should be considered as quite perfect by the fair inmates of the next carriage.

CHAPTER IX.

THIS conveyance, an open glass coach and four, loaded with city belles and their swains, their feathers and ribbands streaming in the wind, by the ejection of chicken bones, the popping of cider bottles, and the scraps of mustard-stained paper which either circled awhile in the air, or alighted on the white dress of some lady in the nearest carriage, plainly showed that your peaceful citizen had at all events studied the warlike maxim of opening a campaign with well-stored magazines.

In short, every species of vehicle and personage, either civil or military, was to be seen, and in those times there were few who did not appertain in one way or another to the latter

class, of which this day brought forth various strange specimens.

"Pray, to what branch of your service does that individual appertain?" said the foreign nobleman, indicating an open landaulet, in which, between a fattish gipsy-looking wife, and a pale, overdressed, minxy daughter, sat a sallow-visaged, greyhound-backed officer, whose head was crowned by a cocked hat much in shape like an inverted canoe, his ill-made uniform hanging in folds over his chest like the dewlap of a lean ox, and a frill projecting from it resembling the vertical pallisades one sometimes sees protruding over an old red brick wall.

"He reminds me of a thin slice of Hamborough beef between a layer of Pumpernickel, * and another of household bread," observed Lord Atherley, whose thoughts rarely wandered from his favourite study.

"That," returned the Duke, "is one of the military retainers of our East India Company, that singular republic of merchants grafted,

* Black Westphalian bread.

like a kernel, within the heart of our monarchy; and in despite of the ridicule which may be attached to their exterior, or of the unjust contempt with which it is the fashion for our King's officers to regard them, a more zealous, valiant, and honourable set of men are not to be met with in any service in the world."

"If the powder of their cannon is as efficacious as that of their curry," added the gourmand, "egad, their enemies' heads must have as hot work as their friends' stomachs."

"That officer, I conclude, belongs to your West India Company, for he looks as if he came from the antipodes of the other," said the Count, pointing out a General, from whose powdered head dangled a long pig-tail, in all the pomatumed glory of the last century, and whose uniform had evidently been made in honour of the Prince of Wales's birth.

"The sight of such men in hot weather always makes me thirsty," observed Lord Atherley, "it reminds me so much of a tavern-sign of the Marquess of Granby."

"Is the command of your divisions abroad

entrusted to such military originals?" demanded the stranger.

"No, thank God!" replied Lord Rumford; "they are merely for home consumption."

"He is one of those veteran Martinets whose swords have rested in their scabbards since the brevet which gave them their rank," added the Duke.

"His head-dress," observed the Count, "brings to my memory an anecdote of an Electoral personage whose attachment to those unmilitary appendages is proverbial: on being restored to the capital of his dominions, nothing appeared to affect him,—neither the proofs of affection of his old and faithful servants, nor the enthusiasm of the people, nor the thousand recollections of former days, touched his heart, until suddenly perceiving amongst the crowd one of his former guard with a cue reaching down to his waist, he burst into tears, and throwing his arms round the neck of his attendant, he sobbed out 'God be praised! all are not false; he has got one still.'"

"Ah! this savours more of service," said the

Duke, as they passed a young officer whose empty sleeve dangling at his button hole, and whose countenance, bearing the trace of recent suffering, showed that he had taken good share in one of the late combats on the Continent.

"To judge by the marks of respect and admiration expressed by the passers by," said the Count, "especially those of the fair sex, one sees, that if your warriors reap the most substantial proofs of the gratitude of their countrymen, they have a reward not less dear to every brave man's heart, in the sympathy and interest which they excite in the bosoms of their fair countrywomen;" and then raising his hat, with that politeness which we call theatrical, the Count saluted the wounded officer, exclaiming at the same time, *honneur aux braves!* and it was evident, by the beam of pleasure which glanced from the soldier's eye, that the compliment was duly appreciated.

"What have we here?" demanded the Count, "who comes, provoking the caper which he seems to chide; a General of Cavalry, I conclude, by the splendour of his dress. "That creature, perched on his horse like a clothes-

peg, and pinched in like one of the toys called devils, is a Cornet of Hussars, bedizened in all the gaudy extravagance of a costume, which, though admirably neat and simple in its original Hungarian form, is not only rendered ludicrous by our tasteless, gaudy alterations, but ruinous to the pockets of those whose vanity induces them to enter a branch of the service, of which the practical field-duties are not adapted to the military intelligence of the nation."

"This, you will say, is more in our way; what think you of that, by way of a light horseman?" observed Lord Rumford, pointing to a yeomanry officer, whose red round face digressed in various tiers of chins, and cheeks almost to his breast-plate, whilst his portly stomach, in utter defiance of sashes and belts, stretched in wild luxuriance over his holsters, concealing almost every thing but the ears of the animal he rode.

"I think," resumed the Count, "that if even such men, (and if all one hears of the invigorating qualities of your national food be true, you must have some hundreds,) forgetting the inconvenience of their bulk, the incommodities

they must be exposed to, even when thus playing at soldiers, and regardless of their own personal comforts, can quit their fire-sides, to take up arms in the defence of their country, that you may continue to bid defiance to the world.—I plainly see," continued the stranger, "that in despite of John Bull's perpetual grumbling, and the jealousy with which he regards a standing army, that no one is more fond of military pageantry; and, above all, that no nation is endowed with a more admirable military spirit, the true essence of which has its source in genuine patriotism; and shows itself, not alone by the young and adventurous bravely fighting, when opposed to the enemy, but by the rich, the powerful, nay, the very infirm themselves rushing with noble devotion to the ranks, when the safety of their country is threatened:—as long as this spirit continues to animate you," added the nobleman, "you must be invincible."

The carriages now arrived upon the heath, and through the assistance of some of the officers on duty, obtained stations close to that reserved for the Royal Family.

The bright beams of a beautiful summer's sun added still greater brilliancy to a scene, which is at all times so well calculated to awaken enthusiasm in the dullest and most phlegmatic mind; nor was the interest diminished by the thought, that the greater part of these brave men were then on their route to join the Peninsular army.

On one side the dense mass of spectators, extending in a semicircle as far as the eye could reach, served as a sort of proscenium to the military spectacle within; whilst the verdant landscape, and dark blue hills in the background, threw out with still stronger relief the gay costumes and burnished appointments of the martial performers. The eyes and ears were alternately delighted, or bewildered with the dazzling splendour peculiar to the uniform of the British infantry, by the harmony of the bands, by the galloping to and fro of staff-officers, by the rolling of the drums, or clanging of trumpets, as successive squadrons or battalions reached the ground; by the ominous rattling of the gun carriages, and the matchless perfection of our brave artillery; by the almost effeminate ele-

gance of our light cavalry, and noble symmetry of the coal-black battle horses of our Guards, and the not less warlike appearance of the cavaliers; and perhaps more than all, by the no common sight of one or two battalions of our gallant Highlanders, whose pipes playing the pibrochs, whose martial carriage and dauntless air, as well as the sable plumes and varied tartans of their national dress, accounted for that terror which their very name inspires in an enemy. Amongst this beautiful body of men, no one was more conspicuous than Arthur Beverley, whose noble height, finely proportioned limbs, and handsome countenance, so well accorded with the garb he wore.

The troops, having previously taken up their proper stations and piled arms, were now scattered or intermingled in an apparent chaotic mass, filling almost the whole area of the plain: here the officers were seen collected in groups, or flying to steal a moment's conversation with some fair spectator; there the soldiers were hastening to greet some friend or relation whom hazard had that day brought to the same spot, whilst others were refreshing themselves at the

booths of some of the numberless itinerant suttlers who follow the movement of troops.

Suddenly, however, the report of a cannon stationed near Hounslow announced the near approach of the Royal cortège; to this immediately succeeded the sharp rattling of drums and the braying of trumpets, summoning the soldiers to their ranks. Brothers embraced brothers, perhaps for the last time; friends pressed the hand doomed never to return again the friendly pressure; fair mouths spoke kind farewells to those whose blood was doomed ere long to stain a foreign soil. There was a shouting of To horse! to arms! Adjutants were seen galloping in every direction; there was a hurrying, a scampering, a confusion, as if the whole mass were in a state of *déroute*, and in a few seconds the wide space which had been choked with a nodding forest of plumes, was completely cleared, and a general silence, only interrupted by the echoing words of command, succeeded to the previous buzz.

To the wondering admiration of the spectators, two long and splendid lines of infantry, flanked by columns of cavalry and artillery, now arose as

it were from the ground in all the still and motionless majesty of military array. There was a pause, a deep but momentary silence, quickly broken by the sharp rattle of a drum, and the sound of a few words pronounced by a deep and sonorous voice; and in another instant a forest of bayonets, produced as if by magic, sprung into the air, whilst the glittering beams of the mid-day sun flashed sparkling from the bright blades of a thousand sabres.—A few trumpet notes from the extreme wings were now heard, the artillery were seen to wheel, gallop, spring from their cars and saddles, unlimber, and with the speed of light the guns stood loaded and prepared. In another instant, flash upon flash, volume upon volume of eddying smoke quick curling o'er each other, followed by the thundering roar of the cannon, bespoke the immediate vicinity of the Queen. The Duke of York, escorted by several of his royal brothers, and a host of generals and mounted officers, now galloped to the front of the lines; the ranks opened, the standards were lowered; drums, bands, and trumpets pealed forth the national anthem; a shout of welcome, raised by the vast concourse

of spectators, loud almost as the booming echoes of the guns, rent the air, and at the same instant the venerable consort of our good old King, attended by the Regent, stood in the presence of the troops.

His Royal Highness having mounted a beautiful grey charger, and placed himself on the left hand of Her Majesty's carriage, rode down the lines; and having inspected the ranks, he then gave directions for the manœuvres of the day to be commenced: after which, the troops were formed into columns, and then marched by in the usual manner;-and having again deployed into line, the royal party retired from the ground with the same honours with which they had been received.

"I have served with almost all the armies in Europe," said the Count, "and I must confess that if there is something less unsoldierlike in the appearance of your men individually, yet when seen collectively, when one observes their admirable steadiness under arms, the velocity and precision of their movements, their marvellous cleanliness, and unrivalled discipline; but, above all, when one

remarks that peculiar air of self-possession and ease which they bear in their countenances, I should say, that if any general in Europe is justified in placing implicit confidence in his soldiers, it is he who has the honour to command a British host; and if ever such men are defeated, I should conclude, that it must be through the imbecility of their leaders, and not from their want of any one essential which can contribute to victory."

"If the arduous, and even unequal nature of the service in which a commander employs his troops, be any criterion of his confidence in them, more than one fortress and battle-field in the Peninsula, will one day gloriously prove the unbounded extent of that of our General commanding in Spain," returned Lord Rumford.

"It was a superb spectacle," returned the foreigner, "to see the Constitutional Monarch of a free nation received by his subjects with such spontaneous, heartfelt proofs of loyalty and attachment; and this also in the presence of thousands of those brave men who are about to draw their swords in defence of that holy cause

which your country is ever the first to support, and the last to abandon."

"I could not, however, look upon those fine fellows," replied the Duke, "in all the pride of vigour and manhood, in all the delusive exuberance of youthful hope and exultation, without a painful sentiment of melancholy; when I reflect how few, perhaps, are ever destined to revisit their native shores, and that the military pomp and brilliant pageantry of this morning, is but the forerunner of a thousand toils and privations to all,—of sickness, anguish, and death itself, most probably, to many."

"Ah! poor fellows, starved to death!" said Lord Atherley: "that is the worst of it. I think I should have raised a corps of volunteers myself, had it not been for the idea of rations; and the mere thought of measuring one's appetite, renders mine indefinite; your portion *pour un* at a restaurateur's, for instance, *on n'en finit pas*. Good God, Sir! who is there who likes to attend even a *battue* before breakfast? What then must be the effects of a battle, without a hope of dinner?

Only conceive, if it is so execrable to shoot with an empty stomach, what a confounded nuisance it must be to be shot at."

The carriage now arrived in London, and the party separated:—the ladies being fully occupied during the following days in preparing for the Drawing-room.

CHAPTER X.

"THE 4th of June!—there is something in the recurrence of this day," said Lord Roxmere, as he accompanied his grandson and wife to Buckingham House, "which brings back to the mind a thousand endearing recollections interwoven with the bright and fairy period of one's boyhood; for, amongst that vast crowd, there are few, perhaps, from the frolic-loving urchin, and humble artizan, to the mature elder, or jewelled peeress, who have not hailed its return with sentiments of joy and satisfaction, at one period or other during the greater portion of a century.—Yes, when its dawn shall cease to be proclaimed by the waiving of royal banners, and the roar of artillery; when

joyous multitudes shall no longer throng these Parks; when it shall even be passed over undistinguished in the calendar, and when he, the good old monarch, whose advancing age it annually records, shall cease to be, it will still live sacred in the hearts of thousands, close linked with some of the dearest associations and sympathies of their early days."

"A sentiment of melancholy steals across the mind," observed the Countess, "when one reflects, that of the thousands of young and lovely beings whose gentle bosoms have throbbed with agitation at the approach of this day, whence would be dated the commencement of their worldly career, hundreds, alas! have long, long been gathered into the great harvest of eternity, themselves, their beauties, nay their very having been,—gone, perished, and forgotten."

"It is too true," replied the Earl; "for of the successive multitudes of either sex, who, with hearts elate with hope and expectation, have paid the first tribute of their homage to Majesty on this day, how large a portion have

been swept away, victims, perhaps, to some one of the thousand bitter woes and miserable fallacies which bestrew the path of life.

> 'And what is life?—a weary pilgrimage,
> Whose glory in one day doth fill the stage
> With childhood, manhood, and old age.
> And what's a life?—the flourishing array
> Of the proud summer's meadow, which to-day
> Wears her green plush, and is to-morrow—hay.'

Generation after generation has disappeared," continued the Earl, "and yet he, the royal patriarch, still lives; but lives, unconscious of the festival which adds another year to the long duration of his eventful reign."

"Whilst every other European throne has been shaken to its very centre by the awful whirlwinds of revolutionary tempests, and whilst the sceptres of other monarchs have been wrenched from their hands by the overwhelming power of him, the miraculous offspring of political convulsions, our King," said Arthur, "has lived and reigned secure, shielded by his own virtues, and guarded by his people's love; a noble monument of Constitutional Majesty,

and an illustrious example to surrounding nations of the indestructible moral power of a sovereign, to whom the liberty of his people is dearer than the diadem he wears, and whose proudest title is,—to be considered the first citizen of his empire, the father of his subjects."

"This, however, is an ill-chosen period for moralizing, and badly accords with the gaiety and splendour of the surrounding scene," said Lord Roxmere, as the carriage fell into the long string of equipages, which extending from the top of St. James's-street, through the Parks, to the Queen's Palace, was flanked on either side by thousands of spectators. Intermixed in the crowd were seen the gay uniforms of the Foot Guards; with the formal cortège of some old peeress, who still adhered to the quaint splendour of her state chair, with its long train of footmen, heyducs, and chairmen, arranged in all the glory of bouquets, buckles, and swords; there were also the patroles of the Life Guards, whose chargers (as if imbued with a portion of that patient forbearance which characterises the British soldier when employed in preserving order amongst his fellow-citizens,)

merely switched their long tails to and fro, as it were to remind the crowd of their unwillingness to injure them.

The display of flags streaming from the towers and steeples; the merry pealing of the church bells; the distant echoes of the cannon; the hurrying to and fro of the countless multitude; the numbers of lovely faces which peeped from the neighbouring windows, or like stands of blooming flowers, filled the adjacent balconies; the coloured lamps, transparencies, and loyal devices which marked the club-houses, or those of the royal tradesmen, together with the magnificence of the horses, harness, liveries, and carriages; as well as the variety of uniforms and brilliant dresses of the persons slowly moving towards the palace, completed a scene of animation, and inspiring splendour, which can neither be seen nor imagined by the inhabitants of other countries.

At length the Roxmeres arrived at the wished for goal, and were received, as usual, by a number of the marshalmen, some of whom were carefully noting down the names of those upon whose pockets they subsequently intended to

levy one of those infamous taxes which so justly excite the surprise and indignation of all foreigners, and which are at once a scandal to the country, and a disgrace to the dignity of the court. Having joined the Granthams, whose carriage immediately followed, and having paused an instant,—the ladies to prune their feathers, examine lappets, and set the hoops, and the gentlemen to arrange swords, hats, and buckles,—they traversed the long unseemly corridor, between the double line of guards and yeomen, from behind whose motley and original costumes peeped forth a number of curious faces, consisting of milliners anxious to see the effect of their own labours, reporters not less anxious to transfer the petticoats of the nobility to the columns of their journals, or friends of the royal household, who had obtained admission into the passages. Having entered the hall, they were conducted by the pages, or rather pushed by those who followed, into the lower range of apartments, there to wait until the signal was given for their ascending to the upper story, where her Majesty

was occupied in receiving the foreign ambassadors and ministers of state.

If any thing could have recompensed Lady Bertha for the mortification she had endured, in consequence of Lord Colnbrook's conduct, it would have been the general buzz of admiration which ran through the apartments when she entered, accompanied by her two lovely daughters and their affianced husbands, though Mr. Maltby had little share certainly in calling forth any portion of this applause. Glittering with the costly jewels which had been given to her as marriage presents, and dressed with no less taste than richness, Camilla appeared that day more than usually beautiful; her perfectly moulded figure, her crystal complexion, and, above all, her majestic style of countenance triumphing even over the graceless deformity of the costume, so long and tenaciously adhered to by the Court. Still there was a peculiar expression in her eyes, dark and brilliant as they were, which bespoke a want of tenderness and feeling, an absence of that gentle softness and delicacy, which is the most interesting feature

in woman. She met the public gaze, not with the timid blush of self-retiring diffidence, but with the steady, unflinching firmness of one who demanded admiration as a tribute; she leant upon her handsome lover's arm more with the haughty air of a Roman conqueror leading some vanquished hero captive in his chains, than with the modest tremor of a young and inexperienced maiden supported by him to whom she was about to swear unchanging love and obedience, through the various vicissitudes of existence.

To those unaccustomed to Courts, nothing can convey a more extraordinary idea of Majesty and splendour, blended with vulgarity and confusion, than an English Drawing-room, rendered still more striking from its being the only thing of the kind in Europe which takes place in the day-time, to which both sexes are admitted at the same time. Nowhere is the influx so prodigious, or the amalgamation of ranks so indiscriminate; accessible to every class of respectable persons who can afford the dress, nowhere is the latitude so unlimited or so absurd; and nowhere is one surrounded

by so many objects which alternately call forth one's admiration, or excite one's surprise.

Enraptured at the sight of so many lovely beings, whose beautiful features and clear transparent complexions defy the treacherous ordeal of mid-day scrutiny; dazzled almost by a waving galaxy of snow-white plumes, or glittering firmaments of precious stones,—brilliant, but less so than the animated eyes which beam around,—one might imagine himself amidst a conclave of ethereal spirits, did not the rushing, pinching, groaning, and perspiring of peers, mayoresses, squires, misses, bishops, and aldermen, intermingled with sailors, duchesses, senators, and hussars, jumbled *pêle-mêle* in one chaotic mass, give one the most painful and substantial proofs of their terrestrial and material properties.

It might be concluded that the presence of so many fair and tender beings, independent of the respect due to the occasion, would suffice to establish some degree of decorum and regularity in an assembly supposed to be composed of the *élite* of the nation; or at all events, that it would suffice to curb that headlong propen-

sity to be first, which our countrymen always exhibit, whether travelling, racing, facing a brook, or charging an enemy,—every where, in short, except in going to dinner: this supposition proves, however, not only to be erroneous, but, strange to say, some of the most bold and desperate agitators on these occasions are the very ladies themselves, who, not content with the defensive privileges and advantages of their sex and dress, make no scruples to adopt offensive arms in the shape of pins stuck in their fans, with which they unmercifully goad those who obstruct them, or by purposely turning out the sharp wire stems of the roses (not *sans épines*) and other flowers which garnish their flounces, wofully scratch and scarrify the exposed legs of those who chance to follow in their train.

How often does it occur, that at the moment one is gazing with admiration on the gentle and interesting countenance of some young and beautiful girl, one is startled out of one's agreeable reverie by having one's nose poked into the pomatum of a judge's wig, or by witnessing the contortions of some red, unhappy

visage, whose agonized features, peering from amidst the surrounding bagtails and lappets, plainly bespeak the sad havoc that is inflicted on some tangible portion of his system by one of those merciless old female Court-goers, who from long practice are perfect mistresses of the art of pinching, stamping, pricking, and hoop-lifting, necessary to aid their advance; as well as that of fainting and hysterics proper to facilitate their retreat.

At another moment, when with one's face turned towards the dense mass which is hard pressing upon him, one endeavours to stem the human torrent, and at the same time to offer assistance to some female fellow-sufferer, one is suddenly regaled with an unexpected shower-bath from the sneezing and sputtering of some tall unhappy mortal, who, in the act of opening his nostrils and mouth, and gasping like an expiring carp, has had those orifices crammed full of *mar-about* feathers by a vertical movement of the lady's head before him, and from his hands being pinioned to his sides by the surrounding pressure, is unable, whatever may be his propensity to

good breeding, to offer the common proof of it. Thus some mischievous cur, which having momentarily seized upon a duck or other winged tenant of the *basse cour*, is seen grinning, twisting its tongue, licking its nose, and making every species of grimace, to free itself from the feathers which the fugitive has left adhering to its jaws.

Having now secured an advanced position near the door, the party stood patiently awaiting the summons for proceeding up stairs, and having been joined by Lord Rumford and other gentlemen, consoled themselves for the delay by criticising the dresses and listening to the remarks of some of the surrounding personages. "Hamet Effendi, the Turkish envoy, must think himself in Mohammed's Paradise, when he finds himself amongst so many beautiful women," said one gentleman to another.

"If he do but examine the dreadful grimaces of the greater portion of the strugglers, he must rather think himself in the Romish purgatory," replied his friend.—"Talking of devils," added he, "here comes that horrid Lady Gizzard and her daughter;—it is very strange that such peo-

ple cannot content themselves with their Mansion House, and not attempt to convert the Drawing-room into a Court of common Council."

The ladies in question now came close to them, and Miss Gizzard, a pert tastelessly dressed girl, was heard to address her sturdy mamma in a half languishing voice: "Law! Memay, I feel so dreadfully puckered, I shall never be able to go through it;—what did you say I was to do when I came before the Queen?"

"Why, take care, child," replied the mother, "not to go down flop on both knees, like your brother Amilcar when nurse combs his hair with a small-tooth comb; and when you kiss her Majesty's hand, mind you do not make a noise with your lips like the cracking of a French sugar-plum."

"But law! Memay," exclaimed the daughter, "if it is true that the Regent is to buss us all, how immensely awful it will be; you know how sensitive I am,—dear me! I hope he has not got chapped lips."

"The Royal Family never have those kind of coarse things, child," rejoined Lady Gizzard, "at least, I conclude not; for one hears of

Prince's powder, *huile à la Reine*, King's wash-balls, court plaister, and pommade divine, but never of royal lip-salve: and while I am thinking of it, mind, my dear, that you do not return the royal salute, and say, 'Thank your Majesty,' like Miss Wigley, the sheriff's daughter; for all the world as if she had been wishing her grandpapa good night."

Pushed on by the crowd, the two fair citizens now passed out of hearing.

"Ah," said Lord Rumford to Lady Roxmere, "here comes that extraordinary original, General Pappendeckel, who never agreed with any human being in his life,—he will contradict himself rather than coincide with any body else; there never was such a pig-headed specimen of German obstinacy. I will see if it is possible to make him give us a sample of his negative powers."

The Baron now approached, and having recognized Lord Rumford, said,—

"Vell, I don't dink dis is bleesant."

"I do not mean to insinuate that it is," replied Lord Rumford;—"indeed," added the Viscount, looking forth into the gardens at the

back of the Palace, "it is quite refreshing to see the green sward and shady foliage,—I wish her Majesty had commanded her throne to be erected under the spreading branches of those fine trees, it would be better a thousand times than being thus stewed amidst this mass of humanity."

"Vell, I don't dink so, not at all," retorted the Baron; "for if you stew here, by Got, you proil dere, for dere is no shate—you have no drees in dis land."

"No trees!" exclaimed the Viscount; "pray what do you call those? why, no country in Europe produces oaks and elms of such majestic dimensions and picturesque beauty."

"I peg your parton," retorted Pappendeckel, "I don't dink so: I hear speak of drees very often, but I never see none. I shall tell you someding: vonce I ride out, mit der Kink in Vinser Park, and so we come to a blace mit a kreat many littel sticks, and mit a kreat many old stumbs, and den dee Kink sha to me, 'Now, Cheneral, you talk of dimber, I'll show you dee Forest, vat you dink, eh?'—Vell, I say, 'I dank your Machesty, but I don't dink so—I see

dee forest, true, but I don't see no drees:' and do you know, dee Kink she vas quite astonisht."

"Why, the discovery must indeed have surprised His Majesty," rejoined Lord Rumford; "but it strikes me, Baron, that you have been unfortunate."

"Vell, I cannot akree mit you," retorted the General, "for I make all dee gampaigns in dee Low Countries, mit Field-marshal Freitag; I vas at Valenciennes, at Courtray, at Bergop Zee, and fifty oder pattels, and I never vas founded; no I am not unfortunate, but I am very ill used."

"With the diffidence of true merit, you have probably not represented your services in the proper quarter. Our Government is not wont to be ungrateful, or backward in recognizing the service of such distinguished men as yourself," observed Lord Roxmere.

"O, I peg your parton," retorted the Baron, his spirit of opposition betraying him, "I can't akree mit you, not at all; for by Got, I ask, for someding every day, but I not get not even a benthon."

"It is not usual," rejoined the Earl, "with us to give pensions to those actually employed, —pensions are the reward for past services; you cannot, as we say, have your bread and eat it."

"Vell, I don't at all dink dat," rejoined Pappendeckel: "now you see dat littel small man mit a large vig; vell, he not only eat his pret, but he always have some big loafs, and a kreat many fishes into dee bargain."

"Then he forms a very rare exception to the proverb," answered Lord Rumford.

"Ah, but I vill beg your parton, my Lort," returned the soldier; "for dere is kreat many more vich is like him: now dat man, she is neader feish, nor fleish; she is half-pay Colonel, and keep a stall into dee pargin."

"A cavalry officer then, I presume," said Lord Rumford.

"Quite dee referse," rejoined the Baron; "for he vas in dee Marines, and now he is a brepend in dee Church."

"If that be the case," replied the Viscount, "I must admit that you have been ill used; they might at least have made you a canon,—it would have been a pretty compliment to the

branch of the service of which you are such a distinguished member; but still it appears to me that you are unfortunate, in not having visited the well-wooded parts of England; for, in fact, there is scarcely an enclosure which is not surrounded, or a river whose banks are not clothed with some of the noblest trees in the universe."

"So dey tell me, but I do not dink so, not by no means," answered the Baron; "now! vere is your riffers, your old Moder Thames, vat is she?"

"Father, if you please," replied Lord Rumford; "you seem to have forgotten the *fluviorum*, Tibris, Orontes; it is quite sufficient to deny the poor Thames his quality of river, without depriving him of his rank as a gentleman."

"Vell, dere ve can't akree at all," retorted the obstinate Pappendeckel; "for I don't dink dat is no rank at all, no! you are all chentelmen in Enkland: ven I go to dee play, dee sixpence gallery, she cry out to von anoder, Zilence, chentelmen! ven I valk in dee streets, von sweep she knock down anoder blackguard,

and she say, You're no chentelman !—and dare ven your shoemaker or your krocer she travels,—vell, she call himself *gentilhomme Anglois:* now mit uns, it is quite anoders ; vee have a kreat deal of nobility, but vee have very few chentelmen."

Whatever might have been Lord Rumford's inclination to agree with his German acquaintance, he was too well-bred to reply affirmatively, and too sincere to differ: he bowed therefore, and remained silent ;—Pappendeckel, on this, continued :—

" Now you dalk of riffers, vat have you like dee Rhine, mit broad plue vaters, mit its pigtoresk rocks, its ancient chateause, and rich vineyards ?"

" I grant you, that we have nothing in this country which can be compared to the magnificent scenery you allude to; but still our Thames has one advantage over your Rhine. The latter, after a short and hurried course, either absorbed by a thousand sands, or divided into an hundred insignificant branches, loses its very name ere it reaches maturity, and is unable, without the aid of other streams, to con-

vey even its own waters into the ocean; whilst the former, increasing in volume and importance as it rolls towards its conflux, not only wafts the fruits of England to the farthest portions of the globe, but conveys almost into our very cellars the produce of your most celebrated wine-pressers."

"Vell, now I dink dat is quite a mistake," retorted Pappendeckel; "now you dalk of vines, where is your vines? Mr. Meduen she take care dat you shall not have dat damn Ports vine; now all you Enklish is so agustomed to likquit fire, dat you cannot trink cool chenuine vines; and so all vat you ket, all vat is sent to dees country, dee foreign vine merchants, she make atultery mit."

"It is very hard, indeed, upon us, that we should be made to suffer for the improper conduct of foreign merchants; but I suppose," said Lord Rumford, "that if the rogues think proper to burn us in this world, their turn will come in that of spirits."

The conversation was now interrupted by a voice close behind them, (which appeared to issue from the speaker's stomach,) exclaiming,

"Bear up, bear up, ship-mate; you're aground on my toe."

And on turning round, his Lordship found that he had unintentionally backed upon the limb of a gallant naval officer, whose courage and skill as a seaman, and whose honourable conduct as a gentleman, were not less proverbial than the bluntness of his address, and the droll manner in which he interlarded his discourse with nautical phrases, even in the presence of the Royal Family, who, however, overlooked the rough and uncourtly deportment of the brave seaman, in consideration of his zeal, loyalty, and unblemished reputation. "Ah, Sir Jasper," exclaimed Lord Rumford, making many apologies for the pain he had involuntarily inflicted, "this is rather warmish work."

"Yes, by God, as hot as the hold of a Guineaman," replied the Admiral; adding, as he looked amongst the crowd, "Why there's little Miss Nettleton beating up against the flood, like a herring-boat amongst the Dutch sand-banks."

"If you know her, it would be charitable to

tell her that she has lost or forgotten her lappets," said Lady Roxmere.

"Then, I'll hail her, by George!" said the Admiral, "though I 'd as soon run foul of a fire-ship;—but there 's Chester, and all his mates have strict orders to bring every craft to, if their top rigging 's out of order;" and then raising his voice, he called out, "Miss Nettleton! you had better shorten sail, and put in here a-bit to refit,—you have carried away your painter."

The lady in question, a little, shrivelled old woman, who by dint of lifting up her hoop first on one side, then raising it on the other, or compressing both parts before her, as well as by some of the other methods before mentioned, had succeeded in penetrating nearly to the last door, now turned her head round, and exhibited a choleric countenance, in which, from the immoderate application of red and white, scarcely a single feature retained its natural tint. Concluding that Sir Jasper alluded to this artificial complexion, she raised herself on her toes, shook her head-feathers like an enraged cockatoo, and answered with a grin of

fury, "You're monstrously pleasant, Sir Jasper, vastly so! When you purchased your grandmamma's picture, with a cocked hat and uniform daubed over it, for your own portrait, I dare say, you great sea-monster, that you wished the old gentleman had carried off your painter."

"Yes, I did, by God, though the lubber deserved some credit for getting the weather-gage of me," replied the good-natured old seaman.

Any farther conversation was now put an end to by the opening of the door leading into the hall; and no sooner was this signal of advancing made known, than a general rush of feathers and powdered heads took place, many dashing and scrambling at the issue with merciless precipitation; whilst others, unable to resist the torrent, patiently abandoned themselves to their destinies. Thus the frothy bubbles of the mountain brook, arrested by some overhanging reed or blade of grass, quiver and fret awhile, until the fragile barrier, yielding to the stream, sinks down, and they, released, dash foaming over the neighbouring fall.

Here, a lady was endeavouring to secure her

dress from destruction, by hopping off sideways; there, one of the judges was being carried off backwards by a charge of dragoons; and there, a delicate beau was seen spinning round like a top, as he was alternately whisked under one arm by the lawn sleeves of a bishop, or buffeted on the other by the sword hilt of a Highlander.

Having traversed the hall, and ascended the staircase, they entered the large apartment, adjacent to that selected as her Majesty's station. There, near the steps of the throne, stood the Queen, supported on one side by the Regent, and on the other by the Princess Elizabeth; whilst the remainder of her illustrious daughters were immediately stationed on either side; their kind benevolent countenances, their unaffected and condescending manner, forming a singular contrast to the haughty and self-sufficient stare of some of their female attendants, whose crabbed and frowning faces were enough to have terrified into hysterics a much less timid person even than the sensitive Miss Gizzard. On the opposite side of the room, so as to leave a large intermediate space for the presentations,

stood the Princes of the Blood, easily distinguished from the crowd of courtiers, statesmen, and ambassadors, by whom they were surrounded, by the majestic height of their persons, as well as the dignity and manly bearing so well adapted to their exalted rank.

Having collected their forces, given the last coup-d'œil to flounces and lappets, and announced their name to the groom in waiting, the Granthams entered the presence. As if it were to mark their displeasure at the conduct of Lord Colnbrook to Fanny, that young nobleman had been received with pointed coldness by the Royal Family; whilst, on the contrary, the Queen and Princesses not only evinced more than usual condescension towards Lady Bertha and her daughters, but congratulated both the girls and their future husbands on their approaching marriage, with every mark of kindness and interest. Having gone through the ceremony of presentation, the party now passed forward through the double row of illustrious persons stationed on either side, and safely arrived once more in the hall, delighted with their reception, and the affability of the Royal Family; and

the carriages being at length arrived, they departed,—the young people to prepare for Mrs. Prague's masquerade, which was to take place that evening, and the elder to repose themselves after the fatigues of the day.

CHAPTER XI.

MRS. PRAGUE'S masquerade had for some time put all London on the *qui vive;* parties had long been made for it, and amongst them four or five fancy-dressed quadrilles, selected from the most beautiful women and most fashionable men in town; and it is scarcely necessary to say that the Miss Grauthams were not the last upon this fair list. Arthur, however, unwilling to exhibit himself in a fancy dress, had resigned his place to another gentleman, contenting himself with being a spectator of the brilliant scene. He had first intended going in his uniform, but the idea struck him that he should amuse himself better if he concealed himself beneath a domino; and he had, therefore, no sooner changed

his dress after the Drawing-room, than he sallied forth in quest of one of these disguises.

His search had, however, nearly proved fruitless, for he found every domino either bespoken, or totally unsuited to his figure. One dress of this kind had particularly struck his fancy; it was of black silk, trimmed with crimson and gold, and formed, with its hood and mask, what is called on the Continent a *chauve-souris*, completely concealing and disguising every part of the person. At first the shopkeeper most positively refused to part with this costume, alleging that it had been expressly ordered by a gentleman whose name he was strictly forbidden to disclose; however, by dint of persuasion and argument, and, above all, by the offer of an extra pound or two, the fidelity of the shopman was overcome, and the domino delivered into Arthur's possession, who, without communicating his own name, paid for his prize, and drove off. His proceeding had not, however, been conducted with the secrecy which he imagined, for he had been observed by a person whom he little suspected, and this was no other than the confidential valet of the Duke of Ulsdale, who, on

seeing him enter the shop, had hastily retired into a back room, whence he saw and overheard all that passed, and of course repeated what he had seen to his master, to whom he also delivered a catalogue of dresses and disguises intended to be worn by other persons.

Having been invited with Lord and Lady Roxmere to an evening party at the Queen's Palace, an honour which upon this occasion he would gladly have dispensed with, it was late before Beverley reached Mrs. Prague's house. The greater part of the company were therefore already assembled, and that motley scene of mirth and confusion, which, strange to say, is in no country so well understood as in England, or so well sustained as by us *grave* English, had already reached its zenith.

Concealed and protected by the inoffensive style of his dress, Arthur was enabled to enjoy the fun, without the bore of being obliged to support a character; and to listen to what was passing around, without the necessity of parrying the endless string of pithy observations, and pungent repartees, now uttered in the squeaking key of the treble, and now issued in the growling

thunder of the double bass; such as, "How d'ye do?" "Do you know me? *eh bien, beau masque!*" "How hot!" "Ah, it won't do, I've found you out;" "Who am I?" "I do not know who you are, but I am bored to death;" "You take very good care to revenge yourself with usury!" "Pray, what are you meant for?" "Ophelia." "That is rather a funny coincidence, for I (taking a pinch of snuff) am the ghost of Hamlet." "The jeweller, I conclude by the size of your gold snuff-box?" "Do they take *Etrenne*, or Martinique *là bas?*" "You had better consult this gentleman; he seems to have just arrived from those parts."

"Pray, Mr. Devil, will you have the goodness to remove your tail from between my legs, and place it between your own?" "What! do you take me for a sneaking devil, that I should carry my tail between my legs?" "To judge by their thickness, I certainly should not mistake you for the Devil on Two Sticks!" "There you have peppered the Devil." "I was not aware that we had more than one Styx in our dominions." "Milk below." "Then it must be boiled, I take it." *Et hoc genus omne, ad infinitum.* Nor was

the amalgamation of characters less curious: there, came a magnificent Brian de Bois Guilbert, walking most lovingly arm in arm with a Rebecca nothing loath; and here, a Carthusian friar confessing himself to a heathen goddess; there, a nun was listening to the *fleurettes* of a Fire-worshipper, whilst a jealous Turk was asking a Christian officer to take care of his wife and daughters; there, Winter was assisting two or three little haymakers to place their shawls in security, whilst Pomona hung lovingly on the arm of an *indigène* from Behring's Straits. There, were Castilians, whose knowledge of Spain was confined to sherry, and Merino rams; and gardeners who knew no more of botany, than that there was a bay of that name: there, were harlequins, whose heavy antics formed a lumbering antithesis to their dress; and clowns, with all the noisy nuisance of their profession, without any of its humour or activity. Here, a valiant Jerry Sneak was defending a trembling Mars from a drunken hackney coachman, who accused the deity of having done him out of his fare; whilst a captain of Italian banditti was calling for Mr. Townshend, the thief catcher, to arrest a rogue

who had picked his pocket; and here, was a French postilion, who imagined that he pourtrayed the character to the life, because he strung together a quantity of abominable French oaths, and vulgar expressions, for every one of which (if he understood their meaning) he richly discovered not the *mis à pied*, but the *mis au chevalet*.

Having at length penetrated into the outer apartment, and made his silent bow to Mrs. Prague, who, in a dress of feathers, skins, and beads, intended to represent Amazalie, the Mexican Princess, had there stationed herself to receive her guests, Beverley's farther progress was impeded by a crowd collected round a tall figure, attired as an astrologer; and it was evident, by the smiles of some, the annoyance of others, as well as the exclamations of "How strange!" "Who can it be?" and some one who knows every body," the wizard was, in fact, much more *au fait* of people's names and propensities than was agreeable to many of those who continued to consult him. Arthur approached as near as he could, and heard the

"cunning man" deliver his oracles in that sort of mystic and equivocal language, which suited his character, and which he appeared to sustain with great success. "Come, Mr. Conjuror, since we are both of the same profession," said a lady dressed as a Spanish gipsey, her face and figure concealed by her mask and the folds of her mantilla, "let us see if the ring of the King of the Genii will protect me from the wand of Merlin."

"What wouldst thou of me?" replied the Astrologer; "is it the past, the present, or the future, thou wouldst learn?"

"I have skill sufficient myself, Mr. Wiseacre, to tell of what is past, and there my science far exceeds yours," returned the gipsey; "I shall therefore be contented if you will inform me, whether I am now seeking to lose something that I have found, or endeavouring to find something that I have lost."

After a moment's consideration, the wise man lifted up the long painted tube through which he delivered his answers, and whispered half audibly in her ear:

"As faded gloss no rubbing will refresh;
As flowers dead lie withered on the ground;
As broken glass no cement can redress;
So virtue blemish'd once, for ever 's lost."

This severe reply seemed quite sufficient for the gipsey, who indignantly casting away the tube, said, "I know it is that stupid coxcomb, Mr. Beverley: I could revenge myself in a moment if I chose; but I shall leave him to be worried by others. Poor fool! if he could foretel his own fate, it would be well for him."

"How do you know it is he?" said her companion.

"I met the Duke of Ulsdale's valet at Panton's shop, and he told me that Mr. Beverley would be here as a Magician," answered the lady.

To hear himself thus spoken of was certainly not very agreeable to Arthur; but unwilling to undeceive the fair person, he allowed her to depart in error.

"Come, my jolly old priest of Delphi," said a young man, addressing the oracle, "I wish you would tell me whether I shall have a good night to-morrow at Watiers', or whether that cursed middle pin will again send the axes to work. I'll

give you ten per cent. to put me in the way of securing a few thousands."

The sage immediately replied,

"Hearken to my counsel, and your gain is sure:—

The way to win is ne'er to play at all,
For he bests wrestles who ne'er tries a fall."

"Thank you for your information," replied the other: "egad, my grandmamma's goose might have hissed one as trite a truism;" and he moved on.

"Consult the stars, and draw my horoscope, most potent wizard," said a female concealed in a pink domino, who Arthur thought was Miss Scarsdale; "here is my hand: Heaven knows under what planet I was born."

"Not from the stars will I my judgment make,
But from thy gentle eyes my knowledge take,"

replied the sage.

"Do you know me, then?" replied the lady, simpering; "well, if you do, it's immensely strange: who am I? think you that I am a wife striving to bury a husband, or a maid endeavouring to find a husband to bury me? perhaps if I cross your hand with a silver token, you'll tell me where I may seek the latter?"

"That is beyond my power," replied the Astrologer; "but thus much I can tell you:—

One seeks a husband where she should; but then
Perchance she seeks not as she should, nor when.
Another searches when she should, but there
She fails; not seeking as she should, nor where.
Whose heart desires the good it wants, and would
Obtain, must seek where, as, and when she should."

This ambiguous reply seemed completely to puzzle the fair applicant; and before she could answer, a gentleman approached, habited in the costume of a *fermier general* in the time of Louis XV.—"Come, Conchuror" said he, "can you tell me my fortune?"

"How wouldst thou have me divine that, the extent of which, they say, thou knowest not thyself?" was the reply.

"That ishn't no ansher," retorted the other: "if thatsh all you know, your shtock of conchuring is not worth a piece of washte paper."

"I can tell thee thus much," returned the other; "that thou wilt never be the poorer for thy generosities, nor the richer for thy virtues."

"How can you tell that? you know noshing

about me," answered the gentleman, not in a very good humour.

" Thou art deceived," rejoined the sage: " I know thee well, and, wouldst thou know thy fate, hearken.

Thou'rt one of those who love to steep
Their brains in gold, and lay their souls to sleep
In bags of bullion; who seek a baron's crown,
And fain would mount, but ingots keep them down:
Who brag to-day, perchance, and beg to-morrow;
Who lent but now, want credit now to borrow.
Blow wind! the treasure's gone, the broker's broke;
A slave to silver, is a slave to smoke."

The personage scarcely remained to listen to the end of these lines, but walked off, grumbling between his teeth, " Some damned bear, I 've no doubt, who has been burning his paws with omnium."

Arthur was on the point of endeavouring to penetrate into the second apartment, when he heard the words " Beware! be wise!" whispered in his ear; and on turning round, he found the oracular tube close to his ear.

" I thank you for your advice," replied Arthur, placing his lips to the tube; " but I

think it would be rather out of character to attempt a display of sense in an assembly essentially devoted to folly: i' faith, friend Wizard, it is rather a proof of your own want of wisdom to give advice so inconsistent with the occasion."

"Young men think old men fools, and old men know young ones to be so," returned the other calmly.

"I cry you *merci* for the compliment," answered Arthur; "but if you will look round, you will find plenty of others more in want of your counsel than I."

"Beware!" again replied the sage: "remember that the race is not always to the swift, nor the victory to the strong."

"I know right well," said Arthur, "that the craft of the subtle fox can sometimes circumvent the courage of the noble lion; but as I am neither going to start for a cup, nor about to enter the lists, your warning is lost upon me."

"Beware!" once more replied the other, "nor like the bat, whose garb you wear, rush heedless into the treacherous flame fraught with your destruction.—

" This world 's a world of danger, and a world of snares;
Its joys are sorrows, and its pleasures cares :
Snares watch thy thoughts,and snares attach thy word;
Snares tuck thy bed, and snares attend thy board ;
Snares lurk in thy resolves, snares in thy doubt ;
Snares lie within thy heart, and snares without."

" One might imagine that you took me for an old poacher," said Arthur, laughing. " If mystery makes a magician, Merlin was a joke to you; but you must give me a more perfect specimen of your art, ere I can consider your oracles worth listening to; so begin by telling me what there is in my outward man which carries with it so strong a savour of folly: as for the inward, of that you can know nothing."

" Honest men often marry soon ; wise, not at all," replied the other.

Though startled by this answer, Arthur replied : " They say, no man knows better what is good, than he who has endured evil; so I conclude, friend, that your message is none of the merriest; however, if you mean to apply the proverb to me, you are quite in error.—Come, I see you mistake me for some one else; so adieu ; and although I may be a fool, and few have not

their moments of lack wisdom, a happier bark never glided over the smooth waters of life, than that of which I am commander."

"The world's a treacherous ocean, beset with reefs more terrible than that with whose points thou once madest such unlooked-for fellowship," answered the Magician.

"This is indeed strange," said Arthur to himself; "he must allude to the Shark's Jaw. Yet, how was it possible to discover me in this disguise?"

Whilst he was preparing to answer, the Astrologer slowly recited the following lines:—

"Close reef your topsails, make your anchors clear;
Tho' calms surround thee, trait'rous storms are near;
Cast oft thy plummet, make it apt to try
Where the rocks lurk, and where the quicksands lie."

"Come," said Arthur, "joking aside, if you really know me, it would be more friendly to tell me fairly what you mean by these ominous warnings: if you do not, I will tell you fairly, that you play your part very cleverly; but you are a little too cynical,—that is all; and so farewel, for I must, in despite of storms and quicksands, make sail."

"I do know thee," replied the Magician; "and therefore I urge thee to return."

"You cannot know me, or you would not do so," replied Arthur.

"Fond youth, give o'er,
And vex thy soul no more,
In seeking what were better far unfound:
Alas! thy gains
Are only present pains,
To gather scorpions for a future wound."

And so saying, the Astrologer engaged in conversation with a lady; whilst Arthur, though somewhat surprised by the singular coincidence of one or two of the Wizard's observations, felt convinced that he had mistaken him for some other person; and quitting the apartment, at length succeeded in penetrating as far as the door of the large ball-room, where, however, his farther progress was again arrested by the dense crowd, which, mounted on the surrounding chairs and benches, were watching the movements of the select quadrilles, then in the act of performing their first dance. Though prevented from gaining a front place, Arthur was enabled to obtain a full view of the

animated and brilliant groups occupying the centre of the floor, whose rich and splendid costumes, glittering with brocades, velvets, and precious stones, (after the manner of the court dresses in the time of Francis the First,) were admirably adapted to Camilla's style of beauty, though not, perhaps, exactly suited to the lightness of modern dancing.

Completely concealed by his disguise, Beverley could enjoy, unobserved by every other person present, all those intoxicating sensations, those inconceivable emotions, which vibrate, as it were, through the innermost recesses of the soul, when one looks on some beautiful and beloved object; more especially amidst the illusions of the ball-room, where the mind receives additional excitement from the fascinations of the music, and the animating movements of the dancers. Thus it was with Beverley, for he gazed on the beautiful being before him, in a state of almost dizzy rapture; indescribable sentiments of love and tenderness thrilled through his veins, and caused him almost to gasp with the exquisite intensity of his feelings. Visions of forthcoming happiness, brilliant and

rapid as thought, succeeded each other in his mind; and he could scarce give credit to his senses, when he reflected that the beloved of his heart, the lovely creature who attracted such universal admiration, was the appointed partner of his future fate, the promised sharer of his rank and honours,—in short, his destined wife.

As Beverley continued to watch the looks and movements of Camilla, he observed with increased pleasure, that she frequently cast her eyes towards the door and round the room, with the anxious expectant air of one who was searching for some absent object; for it was clear, from the indifference with which she listened to her partner's observations, as well as the nonchalance with which she performed her share of the figures, that she took no interest whatever in the dance. It was evident to Beverley that she was awaiting his arrival; and his heart reproached him for his tardiness, when he remarked, from the peculiar expression of her countenance, more soft, more tender than usual, that, unconscious of his presence, she was mentally reproaching him for having so

long delayed joining her, and that half her pleasure was destroyed, since he for whom she alone cared to appear beautiful, was not present to participate in her triumph.

Not for the universe would Beverley have lost one of those searching, inquiring looks, which came home to his very soul as so many proofs of her affection—as so many silent tokens of her love; and he turned round with a feeling of inward pride and delight, in hopes, if the Astrologer (in whom he fancied he had detected Sir Felix Fanwell) was near, that he might witness how inapplicable were his warnings, if indeed the Wizard had penetrated his disguise, or alluded in any way to Camilla.

By the lateral movement of several persons who stood hitherto immediately before him, Arthur's whole figure now became visible to those on the opposite side of the room; and at this moment Camilla's head chanced to be directed towards the door: in an instant, a thoughtful cloud passed away from her brow; her eye beamed with animation, and smiles played on her lips, and she cast a look of mingled tenderness and reproach towards him.

Folding his hands before him, as it were to supplicate forgiveness, and utterly forgetting his domino, Arthur returned her salutation: his heart beating with ecstasy and love, he felt as if he could have thrown himself at her feet and worshipped her, she appeared so fair, so innocent.

However, as he again raised his head, he saw his own figure distinctly traced in the opposite mirror, and he started as if he had trodden on a viper: a sudden, terrible, hitherto unknown sensation cast a chill over his whole body;—those smiles, those anxious looks, those tender marks of recognition, were not for him; for never was disguise more absolute, more impenetrable than his: for whom could they be intended? He turned round with a feeling of fearful suspense and jealousy; there was no one near him save the dense groups of ladies. His heart felt lighter, for it was on him and on no other that her eye was fixed. "Fool, wretch that I am, to wrong her even in thought," said he to himself; "she has evidently detected me even in this disguise." He now moved a little to one side; Camilla's eyes still followed him,

smiling. "Yes," added he, "it must be so; and for the injury I have done you by this one moment of jealous suspicion, I will repay you with long years of tenderness and unbounded confidence."

The music now ceased, the dances terminated, a buzz of applause ran round the room; the crowd, pouring into the centre of the room, intermingled with the dancers, and for a while Arthur was prevented approaching more closely to the object of his affections: he saw her, however, put her fan to her lips, and then beckon him to join her in one of the other apartments, to which the members of her quadrille were directing their steps: in a few seconds more, he was at her side.

Before he had time to utter a word, she whispered in his ear: "How could you come so late! I expect him here every moment—take this;" and she put a note into his hand; "but do not, for God's sake, speak to me whilst he or mamma is with me;—if I can get rid of him after supper for a moment, come into the conservatory—take care, Lady Atherley says he is here disguised as an Astrologer:—go, go;

there he comes with mamma;" and she immediately moved off in the direction in which Lady Bertha and the Duke of Ulsdale (for he was the Wizard) were advancing, leaving Beverley almost petrified with astonishment and agony.

Suddenly starting from the spot, he rushed into the adjacent conservatory, and in a state of mind bordering on distraction, tore open the paper given to him by Camilla, and in a moment the terrible truth, in all its nudity, was made known to him. Thus ran the note: "It is impossible, without compromising my reputation for ever, that I can comply with your wish; any farther delay would entail absolute destruction upon me; for indeed, Felix, all I feared is but too true; and I shudder when I think, that, unless I use my endeavours to accelerate my marriage, all may be discovered, and I am lost. It is therefore cruel of you to torment me with such letters as that I received last night, since I again repeat that I do not, cannot like him; and that if I have been induced to lend myself to the plot which has been carried on so long, he, personally speaking, has had little share in mamma's speculations,—none whatever in my affections. Would

to God that you had his fortune, and I would not hesitate for a moment to tell him to his face all that I feel in my heart. But you have said that it would be madness for us to marry; and in this I agree with you, as papa would not give me a farthing; and upon your income of two thousand pounds a-year we should starve. Precaution and care are now more necessary than ever; therefore do not, I entreat you, write to me again until I am married: a little patience, and I shall be my own mistress; then we shall be enabled to see each other as often as we choose; how often I should wish that to be, you may well guess."

Had the thunder of heaven fallen on Beverley's head, he could not have been more completely overwhelmed and annihilated. Large drops of perspiration stood on his brow, his frame shook violently, and a deadly, clammy faintness came over him, as, with eyes half-starting from their orbs, he read the accursed proofs of Camilla's treachery and guilt: for, unless he misunderstood the sense of her words, and he would have given worlds to have been undeceived, she was not only beyond all imagi-

nation false, mercenary, and treacherous, but polluted: and he shuddered with convulsive agony and horror at the thought. That so much beauty and apparent innocence should be the mere cloak to the blackest perfidy and dissimulation; that he should have been the dupe, the victim of an infamous and deep-laid plot; that the finest feelings of his nature should have been trifled with; his generous confidence abused, and his honour and happiness made the sport of two cold-hearted and mercenary women, were discoveries which tortured him almost to madness; but that the being whom he had almost worshipped as a divinity, and for whom he would have thought the sacrifice of his existence too small an offer, should prove so utterly worthless and degraded, was a fact to which he could scarce give credit; nor would he have believed it, had he not received the damning evidence of her profligacy from her own hands. If there be a feeling more calculated than another to sear the generous heart, it is the discovery of unworthiness in those in whom we have placed its affections. We can bear with fortitude the death of those we love

—it is the common lot of all; we can even hear of their inconstancy, and still love on,—it is the fate of too many; but the discovery of their dishonour is insupportable,—it is the grave of love.

Petrified by the suddenness and intensity of this shock, Beverley stood for some minutes leaning against the wall of the conservatory, in a state of motionless agony, with one hand pressed to his forehead, and with the other convulsively grasping the hateful note; until, roused by the recommencement of the music, whose very strains seemed to increase the intensity of his suffering, he started from the spot, and heedless of the general observation which the violence and wildness of his manner created, he hurried down the stairs, and without waiting for his carriage, rushed into the street, and tearing the mask from his face, exposed his burning temples to the cool morning air, as if its freshness could have cooled the fever which raged within his heart.

CHAPTER XII.

Upon joining her daughter, Lady Bertha informed her, that the Astrologer, whom Lady Atherley had mistaken for Arthur, was in fact the Duke of Ulsdale; and she consequently expressed her astonishment that the former should not yet have made his appearance, especially as several persons who had seen him at the Queen's party said that he had left Buckingham House before them, with the declared intention of immediately proceeding to Mrs. Prague's. This information appeared to cause neither surprise nor regret to Camilla, who, completely occupied in receiving the incense and adulation of the host of fashionable satellites who environed the set in which she was dancing, had forgotten Arthur, Sir Felix, every thing, in short, but her-

self; and thus, utterly unconscious of the storm which was impending over her, had paid no attention to the hasty departure of the black domino. Before, however, half the figures of the dance were terminated, she was both alarmed and astonished by seeing an individual rather hastily endeavouring to make his way towards the spot where she stood; and although he was habited in a domino, she immediately recognised Sir Felix, who, in fact, appeared to take little pains to disguise himself.

The moment the music paused, Fanwell approached, and, before she had time to demand the motives of this sudden metamorphosis in his costume, said to her, with considerable agitation of voice and manner:

"Have you seen or spoken to any person dressed in a domino such as that which I wrote to you I had ordered?"

"Good God! how can you ask such an extraordinary question?" returned Camilla, starting and turning pale: "it is too bad of you to terrify me in this way!"

"You cannot be more alarmed than I am," replied the other.

"What can you mean?" said Miss Grantham, "did I not speak to you but a few minutes past in the refreshment-room—did I not give you a note?"

"A note!" exclaimed Sir Felix with increased agitation, "then you have ruined all!"

"Do not, for God's sake, mystify me in this cruel manner," answered Camilla; "in heaven's name explain your meaning; torture me no longer, I implore you;" added she, her frame trembling with the presentiment of some dreadful misfortune, "what have I done?—to whom have I spoken?"

"To Beverley himself," rejoined Fanwell, "it must have been to him you gave the note; for, as my carriage drove up to the door, I saw some person rush hastily out of the house in the identical costume which I had expressly ordered for myself. Anxious to discover who had played me this trick, I directed my footman to follow; he did so, and in a few seconds returned, saying, that it was Beverley."

"Beverley!" exclaimed Camilla, "then I am indeed lost!"

The idea of having betrayed herself to the

very person whom it was most important to have deceived, was too much for the strength of her nerves; a deadly sickness came over her, and she would have fallen to the ground, had not Sir Felix and one or two other gentlemen hastened to her support. Little suspecting the real cause of her daughter's indisposition, Lady Bertha naturally attributed it to the fatigues of the day, and when, by dint of Eau de Cologne and other stimulants, Camilla was in some measure restored, and anxiously requested to return home, her ladyship ordered her carriage and left the party. When they reached Brook-street the wretched girl immediately retired to her apartment, in a state of mind more terrible than that in which she had plunged the unhappy Beverley, dismissed her maid, and in an agony of fear, shame, and anxiety, threw herself upon her bed, awaiting with the terror of a condemned criminal the return of a morning, which must inevitably bring with it the disclosure of her fatal secret. Nor had she miscalculated; for before Lady Bertha quitted her own apartment, a messenger arrived from Portman-square, bringing the following letter from Beverley:—

Portman-square, 5th June 18—.

The enclosed copy of a note which accidentally fell into my hands last night, will sufficiently account to your ladyship for the painful necessity which is imposed upon me, of breaking off all further communication with one in whom a few hours past were centered all my future hopes of happiness, all my ideas of human perfection and virtue. I will neither dwell on the agony of mind, which I endure at this sudden and unexpected destruction of all my dearest expectations, nor increase the bitterness of your maternal feelings by upbraiding Miss Grantham for a proceeding, to the truth of which I can scarcely give credit, though the proofs are before me:—no, although she has offered to me the cruellest injury which it was possible to have inflicted upon my heart, yet I have loved her too well, to be able to hate her even now. I therefore pity, and forgive her; and may her own conscience be equally lenient in its dealings.

"Let not your ladyship be alarmed, lest I should attempt to revenge myself, by breathing a word against the reputation of your child; no—though she has certainly merited little indul-

gence at my hands, though my happiness, nay my honour were the destined victims of the most cold-hearted and mercenary intrigue, yet I have loved her, and that remembrance is a sufficient guarantee of her security.

" Annihilated by the suddenness of this blow, I feel that change of scene is necessary to me; and I have therefore determined upon leaving England forthwith. It is possible that amidst the activity of foreign service, I may find some relief for the sufferings of a wounded heart. Your daughter's secret will be buried in my breast, and if the integrity of her reputation depends on my silence, she has nothing to fear: I can bear with fortitude the odium which must naturally attach itself to a proceeding so extraordinary as mine will appear to be; but the idea of her, whom I have loved so tenderly, being publicly branded with disgrace is insupportable."

The rage and astonishment of Lady Bertha on perusing this letter, and above all her unfeigned disgust on reading that from her daughter to Fanwell, exceeded all possible conception; hastening into Camilla's apartment she

gave vent to her choler by every expression of indignation and reproach; until, overcome by the violence of her emotions, she sunk down on a chair, and burst into tears. It was indeed a most overwhelming blow for the feelings of a mother, selfish and worldly even as Lady Bertha.

We must pass over the details of this interview, which terminated in Camilla's earnestly imploring her parent to combine with her in pressing upon Sir Felix the necessity of their immediate marriage. If the thoughts of uniting her child to the man whose cold-blooded profligacy had converted all her long-cherished dreams of honour and aggrandisement into bitterness and disgrace, were odious in the extreme to Lady Bertha; it may be imagined how abhorrent it must have been to a woman of her proud and haughty disposition to find herself absolutely driven to supplicate this very man to marry her daughter. But it was the only alternative which now remained—the only method by which it was possible to screen her daughter, herself and family from ignominy; and she therefore sat down, though with feelings of disgust and repugnance, and wrote a few lines

requesting Sir Felix to call in Brook-street without a moment's delay.

"You must elope with him immediately," said she to Camilla, as soon as she had dispatched the note. "I must pretend to know nothing of the matter; your reputation will then be saved; nay, the world will perhaps give you credit for disinterestedness, in flying with the man you love, in despite of all the inducements of rank and fortune; and a laugh will then be against Mr. Beverley."

In the course of half-an-hour the servant returned, and the reader may form some idea of the mother and daughter's feelings, when they were informed that Fanwell had left town early that morning, having previously directed the following letter to be delivered to Miss Grantham.

"Park Lane.—Out of delicacy and regard to your feelings, I have deemed it most prudent to leave London for a short time, and I should strongly recommend your persuading Lady Bertha to follow my example. I cannot, however, quit you, never perhaps to meet again, without declaring that I would have flown to

your feet, and urged you by every argument which the most devoted attachment could inspire, to bless me with your hand; but, alas! a fatal and insurmountable barrier is raised between us. Yes, Camilla, I owe it to you and myself to reveal the dreadful secret which in tearing me for ever from you, is fast drawing me into a premature grave. Good God! my pen refuses to trace the hateful words—I am already married. Horrible recollection! yes, ere I had attained an age to understand the duplicity and profligacy of the world, the generous innocence, and unsuspicious ardour of my nature were taken advantage of by an artful and designing woman older than myself. In a moment of weakness and exaltation I fell a victim to her snares: in a word, a secret marriage took place, and I became the husband of a worthless profligate. The discovery of this fatal truth was immediately followed by our separation. In vain I endeavoured to burst asunder the accursed toils in which I had been entrapped, but the law refused to unlink the fetters which the Church had, alas! too firmly riveted. I can no more; my eyes are

blind with tears. Ah! do not hate me, for if there be a creature more wretched in the world than another is, it is the miserable

FANWELL."

The surprize of the reader will be great when he hears that every syllable of this letter was false. Well aware that the Granthams could not publish his villainy, or even demand personal satisfaction without exposing themselves, secure also from any risk of pecuniary damage,—(the only thing which ever seemed to make an impression on his mind,) Sir Felix enjoyed rather than repined at the misery he had caused; and this story of his marriage, the wanton invention of the moment, was but a cold-blooded aggravation of his perfidious conduct. In fact, Lady Bertha saw through its baseness and hypocrisy in an instant; and with the bitterness of soul which a mother's heart alone can feel in such a horrible position, she saw that all that remained for her was to take such precautions as might best conceal the truth from the world. Confident of the generous Beverley's silence, she gave out to her friends that the marriage had been abruptly broken off

by the Roxmeres, on account of settlements; and then recollecting the peculiar circumstances attending Arthur's birth, she hinted as a secret, that great doubts were entertained by the solicitors of her husband and Mr. Maltby, respecting Arthur's legitimacy. In the mean time the unhappy Camilla, overwhelmed less perhaps by shame and remorse, than disappointment and chagrin at the cruel conduct of Sir Felix, was attacked by a violent fever, which reduced her to the brink of the grave, (an illness which the public attributed entirely to Beverley's behaviour,) but youth and a strong constitution at length triumphed, and in a few weeks she was enabled to remove from London, having first seen her sister united to Mr. Maltby.

It is necessary, before we proceed, to offer a few words of explanation upon the principal occurrence of the last chapter. From the period of Camilla's first appearance in the world, she had always distinguished Fanwell from amongst the number of her fashionable admirers; and in fact, as far as it was possible for her to feel susceptible of love, had certainly

been attached to him. It has been stated that she had never felt the slightest interest for Beverley, and had only entered into her mother's plans, first from jealousy towards her cousin Lucy, and latterly from a worldly calculation of the brilliant advantages which such a marriage promised. On the other hand Fanwell, utterly incapable of loving any one but himself, had, with a cool head, quickly discovered the preference she accorded him; and although it flattered his vanity, it touched not for an instant his selfish heart; on the contrary, he determined, if possible, to take every advantage of the ascendency he had obtained over her; utterly callous and indifferent to the consequences. Neither the attentions of Sir Felix, nor the preference of Camilla for him, had escaped the observation of Lady Bertha; but in the first place he was one of that set of fashionable men with whose attentions all women are pleased; and secondly, she never dreamed of there being any thing serious on either side, since she knew him incapable of loving, and thought her daughter not less void of susceptibility—and thus she had neglected to take

any precautions against an intercourse fraught with such miserable results. In short, it was not until Beverley's return that she began to open her eyes; and whilst she cautioned her daughter to be more circumspect, she hinted to Fanwell, that his visits in Brook-street must for the present be discontinued. From that period both the correspondence and meetings of Sir Felix and Camilla had been carried on with the utmost secrecy, and would never most probably have been discovered, had it not been for the accident narrated in the last chapter, and which originated in the following circumstance.

Having received instructions to leave London on military business of importance, Sir Felix had written to Camilla his intention of returning for the masquerade, as well as a most minute description of the dress, under cover of which, and his supposed absence from town, he hoped to be enabled to converse with her unsuspected. It was late on the night of the fête, ere Sir Felix could reach town, and having sent for his domino, was told, that in consequence of his not having demanded it sooner, the shop-keeper,

concluding that it would not be wanted, had disposed of it to another gentleman. Little imagining who this person was, Fanwell put on another dress, which chanced to be in his possession, and proceeded to Mrs. Prague's, where he entered the house at the very moment Beverley was in the act of departing.—The result is already known.

We must now return to Arthur. After a night passed in the greatest agitation of mind, a portion of which he employed in writing to Lady Bertha, he, from a painful sense of duty, and in the strictest confidence, communicated to his relatives the occurrences of the last evening, together with his consequent determination of leaving England as soon as possible. It was with sentiments of greater indignation than surprise, that the Earl and Countess listened to details, which completely corroborated the unfavourable opinions they had ever entertained of Camilla; and whilst they condoled with Arthur, at the shock which his feelings must have received, they yet congratulated him and themselves, on a discovery which had rescued them from such a con-

nexion. Unwilling to aggravate the poignancy of Arthur's feelings, by animadverting upon the conduct of the Granthams, whose deeply laid schemes had met with such signal discomfiture, the whole attention of the Earl and Countess was now turned towards their grandson, whom they conjured by every possible argument to abandon his project of joining the Peninsular army; Arthur, however, remained inflexible, and all that could be obtained from him was a promise that he would not prolong his stay beyond a year. The advancing years and declining health of both Lord and Lady Roxmere, rendered the thoughts of this separation still more painful to them, and it was with forebodings of the most melancholy nature, that they witnessed the preparations made for Arthur's departure.

In the mean time, the most strange and improbable stories, respecting the sudden rupture of Beverley with the Granthams were circulated, many of them of a nature so unfavourable to him, that although he had resolved, and still determined to preserve all possible secrecy upon the subject, still he felt that it

was necessary for him as an officer, to secure himself against the imputation of dishonourable conduct, and to be prepared (in case the question should be mooted by his comrades) to offer such testimonials of his innocence, without compromising Miss Grantham, as would satisfy the high-minded and gallant men amongst whom he was about to return.

Whatever might have been Lord Colnbrook's motives for behaving as he had done, and Arthur now felt convinced that his former suspicions had been but too well grounded, his Lordship was amenable only to public opinion, and this appeared to have been peculiarly lenient in its judgment of the young nobleman's conduct. So true is it, that some persons are able to set the laws of social observances at defiance with the utmost impunity, whilst the slightest errors or faults of others are persecuted, and censured with the most relentless virulence. As a soldier, Arthur felt that his position was far different to that of the Marquess, and that he must submit to an ordeal, infinitely more severe and scrupulous than that of fashionable opinion. Instances

were within his own knowledge, where events of a similar nature had been taken up by the officers of regiments, as derogatory to that spirit of chivalrous honour and gentlemanly conduct which is peculiar to the British army; and which shows itself, not only by a display of the most undaunted valour before the enemy, but by the most scrupulous adherence to the rules of honour and integrity in all the private transactions of life, and the most unqualified disavowal of every act which can militate, in the slightest degree, against the character of a gentleman.

To whom, therefore, could Arthur apply himself, with the certainty of satisfying the most scrupulous, than to the Commander in Chief himself? and he therefore resolved to write his name down upon His Royal Highness's list, and to confide his secret to him. On the day of the levee, Arthur went to the Horse Guards, and having waited his time amongst the long string of dissatisfied or grumbling petitioners, each of whom thought himself, like Pappendeckel, the most ill-used man in the service, he was at length called for by the

Aid-de-camp in waiting, and ushered into the Duke's apartment. Upon Beverley's entrance, His Royal Highness advanced a pace or two towards him, and it was evident, by the cold formality of the Prince's manner, and the severity of his look, so different from his wonted affability and kindness, that he also had imbibed the popular prejudice. After a moment's hesitation, and an effort to overcome the timidity which was natural to him, His Royal Highness said, "I am sorry to find myself called upon to say, that I am by no means satisfied with your conduct."

"I came, Sir," rejoined Beverley, after making his obeisance, "to intreat your Royal Highness's indulgence, whilst I explain a circumstance, in which I fear I am blamed."

"Not without fair grounds," answered the Duke, interrupting him, "if there is any foundation in the reports which are so generally circulated."

"Sir," rejoined Beverley, "I trust it will be in my power to do away the evil impressions which your Royal Highness has received, if you will have the kindness to read this."

"If you have any memorial," answered the Prince, "send it in through the proper channels. It is no business of mine," added he, "to enter into the private affairs of officers, or to interfere in any thing which may be connected with their domestic concerns, as long as nothing occurs to militate against the character of a profession, of which I have the honour to be the chief. There are, however, circumstances, and occasions in which I have been induced to deviate from the general rule, and in thus acting, I believe, I have but consulted the interest, and wishes of the service in general. There is no tribunal, over which I have any jurisdiction, that can take cognizance of such proceedings as yours towards Miss Grantham; but since you have thrown yourself in my way, I feel it my duty, candidly to express my dissatisfaction in the most unqualified terms."

The Duke now made one of those bows, which signified that the visitor might depart, but Arthur, holding out Camilla's note, said, "I implore your Royal Highness to read these few lines, and my justification will be complete."

With great reluctance the Prince took the

paper, which, when he had terminated, he returned to Beverley, and with the frankness and generosity of a noble mind, immediately said, "I could not have believed it possible! I have wronged you, and am very sorry for it. Much as I regret what has past, I am most happy to find that you are not to blame, and that I have done you great injustice."

Thanking the goodnatured Prince in the most grateful terms, Arthur said, "I have now a favour to ask of your Royal Highness, which I trust you will not consider indiscreet."

The Duke remained silent—of the numbers who regularly attended his levees there was not one perhaps who did not either commence or terminate his address in the same formula.

Arthur proceeded. "All I have to ask of your Royal Highness is, that you will graciously bear in mind, that in desiring to exculpate myself in your opinion, and in yours only, I do not wish to injure the reputation of Miss Grantham: and I therefore again earnestly intreat your Royal Highness not to permit the

contents of this note to go any further;" and so saying, Arthur tore up the letter and threw it into the fire-place.

"I thank you for your confidence," rejoined the Duke, "and you may rely upon its not being abused; but you must permit me at all events to state, whenever I hear the subject mentioned, that I am perfectly satisfied with your conduct." Arthur bowed, and the Duke added, "by the bye, I hear that you are going to the Peninsula; you will probably prefer being on the staff. Taylor shall write to Lord Wellington, and you may therefore make your arrangements accordingly." Then holding out his hand, his Royal Highness wished him a safe and speedy return; and significantly bowing, dismissed him, to admit an old general, who having merely one or two governments, a regiment, and God knows how many other sinecures, thought himself not only very unfortunate, but extremely ill-used, and therefore modestly came to solicit for a district.

In a fortnight from this period, Beverley's preparations were completed, and he again

bade adieu to his relations, and in the course of a few days he was leaning over the stern of a vessel bound for Portugal, watching the shores of England as the blue waters of the ocean appeared gradually to rise above her white cliffs and rocky headlands.

CHAPTER XIII.

After a prosperous voyage of a few days, Beverley landed at Lisbon, and was as much disappointed with the interior of that celebrated city, as he had been previously struck with admiration at the splendid panorama which it presented to the eye as the vessel which bore him swiftly glided up the tranquil waters of the Tagus. Having made the usual purchases necessary for his advance up the country, he ordered his servants to proceed with his baggage and horses by the direct road towards Ciudad Rodrigo, near which fortress the headquarters were then stationed; whilst he himself having procured post mules, took the more circuitous route by Coimbra to the Spanish frontier, accompanied by an officer who had served

the whole of the late campaigns with the army. "It is a heart-rending sight to look upon a scene of such utter desolation and misery as that which presents itself on every side," said Beverley to his companion as they advanced on their journey.

"More especially," replied the other, "for you who have just quitted the happy island, where the ruthless devastation inevitably attendant on the movements of contending armies is utterly unknown."

"The contrast is indeed dreadful," rejoined Arthur. "There, peace and abundance appear to have stretched their golden wings over the land; here, all is barrenness and devastation; not life alone, but vegetation seems to feel the horrid influence of the war."

"Which in point of atrocious cruelty and rapine on the part of the invaders, and devoted constancy and patriotism on that of the invaded, is unequalled in the pages of history," answered the officer.

"And yet it is not unusual to undervalue and despise the Portuguese," observed Arthur.

"We who have witnessed what they are

capable of achieving as soldiers,* and who have seen the efforts and sacrifices they have made as patriots, must at all events render them the justice they merit," said the officer; "it is to the besotting ignorance of the most bigoted priestcraft in Europe, to the tyranny of their rulers, or the imbecility of their government, that they are indebted for their gradual decline from that great estate when Camoens sung, "*as gloriosas memorias*," of those illustrious barons and kings, who spread the renown of the Portuguese name to the furthest corners of the earth."

As soon as the travellers quitted those celebrated lines, which in arresting the progress of

* One instance amongst a thousand will suffice. At Badajoz the bodies of the Portuguese grenadiers and caçadores lay at the very summit of the great breach, intermingled with those of their brave allies; nay, the very foremost amongst these was a Portuguese, who had fallen within the ramparts, his hand firmly clenched upon the throat of a French serjeant—both had perished. The scene which that spot presented at daybreak on the morning subsequent to the storm, can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Nearly two thousand gallant men, the flower of the British army, lay within the space of a few yards, dead, dying, mangled, or suffocated in the ditch.

Massena, influenced in a great measure the destinies of Europe, the traces of the recent invasion at once burst upon their sight in all its naked abomination. It seemed as if the demon of malice and destruction had accompanied the footsteps of the invaders, and steeled the hearts of the once gallant and chivalrous French, and it was therefore with mixed sentiments of curiosity and disgust that Beverley examined each object as they passed.

Here were beautiful villas, their splendid apartments begrimed with filth and smoke; their furniture utterly destroyed; their doors and windows, nay their very floors torn up and burned, their courts strewed with broken vessels, rags and corruption; their statues mutilated, their fountains choked, and their gardens trampled under the feet of cattle; whilst, horrible to look at, here and there in the dreary apartments might be seen the upright and still unburied skeleton of some wretch who had crawled in there to perish;—fit tenant for such a scene of misery. Here vineyards and olive-grounds, the only resource of more than one generation, were rooted up, or felled for

fuel; their villages and hamlets roofless and untenanted, except perhaps by three or four squalid beings, whose countenances, as they wandered amidst the scorched and crumbling ruins, bespoke extreme destitution; or by a few houseless, friendless dogs, whose half-starved, lank appearance, as they slunk howling away, made desolation still more desolate. No signs of cultivation in the fields, little of habitation in the towns, the approaches to which were palisaded and intrenched, and the neighbouring edifices perforated for musketry; whilst the richest damasks or silks had been cut up for sand-bags, and the chests and wine-casks which had escaped the flames, were converted into gabions. House after house pillaged, street after street demolished, nought remaining but the mouldering walls. Churches and chapels plundered and defiled, having served either as stables for cavalry, or slaughter-houses for butchers: their altars and crucifixes, nay, the very image of the Saviour, hitherto respected by Christians of all persuasions, burned and polluted; the pious sentences, or scriptural quotations defaced, and in their place obscene

figures, impious ribaldry, or the names of the invaders or their regiments, scored upon the blackened walls.

Amidst these scenes of devastation, it was easy to distinguish the towns which had been occupied by the British subsequent to the retreat of the enemy, by the efforts which had been made to purify them from their filth, by the construction of chimneys, as well as the various attempts at comfort and cleanliness, and habits of which Englishmen of every profession carry with them to the farthest corner of the world.

"From two or three circumstances, which occurred to me during our stay in this place, it never will be effaced from my mind," said Arthur's companion, as they slowly passed through the little town of Cartaxo; "it was in that house in which my career in this world would most probably have terminated, had it not been for the kindness of the great man, whom schoolboy ensigns and fire-side generals think proper to accuse of heartlessness and want of feeling to those under his command."—"Why, I confess," answered Beverley, "that there exists

a prevalent opinion, that he does not permit the finer feelings of nature to betray him into any great acts of weakness, or peculiar consideration for his officers and soldiers. They say he is lavish of his censure, but sparing of his praise; prompt to chastise, but slow to reward; and that the comfort and convenience of the troops is the last consideration which disturbs his repose: providing they are able to perform their duty, he cares not what privations or hardships they suffer."

"It is a base and infamous calumny," indignantly replied the other, "invented by those who are jealous of his glory, and envious of that enthusiasm and confidence with which he, and he alone, has inspired the army; or by those who, having committed some act of imbecility or insubordination, have rendered themselves unworthy of his protection. Rely upon it, Beverley, the same base men who embittered the last moments of the brave Moore, are equally eager to vilify and traduce his successor; nay, they witnessed our retreat with joy, since it appeared to be the forerunner of disgrace to the man they hate; whilst they looked

with grief upon that of the enemy, since it confirmed the confidence of the soldiers, and added fresh laurels to those which already decked the brow of our commander: but the wretches are not worth the words I waste upon them,—their doom is sealed; they will sink down forgotten and despised to a dishonoured grave; whilst he whom they have dared to calumniate, will live in the grateful memory of posterity interwoven with the glory of England, as long as the universe exists."

"You speak with enthusiasm," said Arthur.

"I merely echo the opinion of forty thousand brave men," answered the officer; "and it is this enthusiasm, uniting us in one sentiment, animating us with one spirit, which renders us invincible: to return, however, to your former observation: all those who have served under his orders will bear witness, that the only wants and necessities of the soldiers are not a perpetual source to him of mental anxiety and personal solicitude, but that he takes the greatest interest in the comforts and conveniences of the officers, as far as the discipline of the army, and the nature of the service, will admit.

An instance which occurred to myself will sufficiently prove the one; and there is no doubt, since you are to be on the staff at head-quarters, that many days will not elapse ere you will have ample proofs of the other."

"I should much like to hear the circumstance you allude to," rejoined Arthur; "for, inasmuch as I have been taught to consider him superior in military talent to every other captain of the age, so much the more do I wish to look upon him as not inferior to others in humanity and kindness of heart; pray, therefore, narrate your adventure."

"There is nothing adventurous or romantic in that which I have to relate," replied Beverley's friend,—"it is a short plain matter of fact;" and he thus continued:—"During our pursuit of the enemy from Villa Franca to Santarem, my company was thrown forward, upon a dark and tempestuous evening, to the outposts; drenched with rain, fatigued and hungry, we considered ourselves fortunate in finding a large half-ruined villa in the centre of our post, where we soon established ourselves; and having passed the night there, again

moved on before daybreak. Our rejoicing was, however, converted, ere long, into lamentation; the treacherous building which had afforded us shelter, had been an infected hospital; its walls were reeking with contagion and putridity: a malignant fever broke out amongst us; I did not escape its baneful influence — was given over — rallied — but from want of proper nourishment, which I could not afford to purchase, or could not have procured if I had possessed the means, relapsed, and was a second time abandoned. Nature, however, made one more effort; the vigour of my constitution still combated against the force of the disease. During this struggle between life and death, some one chanced to mention my condition at Lord Wellington's table, spoke favourably of my conduct as an officer, stated that my relapse was to be attributed to the want of strengthening and nutritious aliment necessary to an invalid, and insinuated that my illness and subsequent relapse were, in a great measure, the result of the privations I had imposed upon myself, from having remitted the greater part of my pay to England to assist

a widowed mother. This was in substance true, but it was also a secret, which I thought known to myself alone."

"This trait does the greatest honour to your character, and makes me feel still more proud of your friendship," said Beverley.

Thanking Arthur for the compliment, the officer resumed: "I was subsequently informed that Lord Wellington was silent, and appeared to take no notice of what had been said; nevertheless, his ears and heart were open. On that evening I lay upon my mattress in that half dozing, dizzy state of torpor, which is the effect of extreme debility. My mind was filled with strange confusion. Visions of life and eternity, gardens filled with delicious trees and bubbling fountains, and purpled with miriads of winged angels, hovered about me; but as I stooped to slake my thirst, and pluck the luscious fruit, they vanished; and I lay writhing and wounded upon the field of battle, surrounded by thousands of black and mangled corpses, my parched and feverish lips vainly quivering for a drop of water: a dreary silence reigned around, unbroken save by the groans of

the dying, or the howling of the wolves. Then arose the image of my mother, and with her one whose memory I now dare not think upon; they bent fondly over me, and staunched the blood which flowed from my wounds, pouring cool balsams on my lips; I strove to embrace them—again the scene changed, and I lay upon my pallet—suddenly methought I heard footsteps, and saw the figure of Lord Wellington approach my bed—I started, shouted as if calling to my men to stand to their arms, and made a violent effort to rise; but, overcome by weakness, I fell back exhausted and senseless on my pillow. When I recovered, my servant, who had been absent from my room, informed me that a sum of dollars (exceeding that which I had remitted to my mother) lay upon the table, and that my Portuguese boy declared he had seen the '*great Lord*' issuing from my chamber. Overcome with gratitude and surprise, I scarcely knew how to express my feelings, when I really ascertained whence this money came, and that in fact the latter part of my vision was substantial: but my benefactor did not pause here; for many days I was supplied with every kind of delicacy

from his table; and when sufficiently restored to bear the motion of the journey, I was informed that his Lordship's own litter was prepared to convey me to Lisbon."

"But surely you or your family must have been known to him," said Arthur.

"I beg your pardon;—I was a soldier of fortune; my name, nay, my very existence were strangers to him."

"Then, it is a trait of kindness as honourable to his feelings as a man, as it is flattering to your conduct as a son," answered Arthur.

There is something in the nature of a soldier's life, especially when on foreign service, which leads him to evince a greater degree of confidence and open-heartedness towards his comrades than is to be met with amongst men living in every other order of society. Undergoing the same hardships, and braving the same perils; animated by the same spirit, and participating in the same pleasures, they are united one to the other by a bond of brotherhood and cordiality, which not only leads to the most familiar intercourse, but speedily overcomes those barriers of restraint and reserve, which enchain the tongues

of others, and prevent their pouring forth, one to the other, the effusions of their hearts, especially in all affairs connected with the fair sex.

It was in this spirit of confidence that Arthur's companion said to him, after a pause of some minutes,—

"I have motives of a more romantic nature than those I have recounted, to remind me of this place, for, it was here that I saw Amelia de —— for the last time."

"Amelia de ——!" exclaimed Arthur, "what! the beautiful girl whose assumption of the veil produced so great a sensation in Lisbon, and who was said to have been affianced to some English officer? I was not aware that you were acquainted with her."

"Too well!" replied the officer. "I am the Englishman of whom you heard so much; and if you feel inclined to listen to a love tale, it may perhaps beguile a part of our journey across this barren plain."

"It will give me the greatest pleasure to hear your account of an affair which has been related with so many versions."

"Upon our first landing at Lisbon," said

Arthur's friend, "accident designed me as the temporary occupant of the house of the Countess de ——, whose only son was one of those false misguided Portuguese who had followed the traitor Allorna into France. You have heard enough of the beauty of Antolina de —— to comprehend how dangerous the constant intercourse of such a lovely creature must have been for the heart of a young soldier just arrived from England, with a predetermination to fall in love with the first pair of black eyes which looked kindly on him. In fact, I became passionately enamoured, and in due time had the happiness to discover that my attachment was returned.

"For many months we corresponded, and met as often as circumstances would permit. At first the Countess had refused her sanction to our union; for I was poor, a protestant, and a foreigner; at length, yielding to my solicitations, and the importunities of her daughter, she consented: a dispensation from Rome was applied for, and it was agreed that our nuptials should take place whilst the army was in the lines; but unfortunately the sudden retreat of the enemy obliged us to postpone the ceremony.

My illness, as you are already aware, immediately ensued; I again returned to Lisbon, and was of course received in the house of my promised bride. Change of air, but above all, the presence of the being I adored, soon restored me to health, and the period of our marriage was again determined on; I had even obtained a short prolongation of leave for this purpose.

"The eve of the day which I had fondly looked forward to with such eager expectation, was already close at hand: judge of my feelings:—intelligence reached the unhappy Countess that her wretched son had been surprised by a party of armed peasantry whilst endeavouring to penetrate into the interior; a traitorous correspondence had been found upon his person; he had been conducted to the head-quarters, recognised, and forthwith delivered into the hands of the Portuguese authorities for trial. The proofs against him were plain and incontrovertible; his doom was therefore as inevitable as it was merited; he was condemned to die by the *garotte*, his body to be burned, his estates confiscated, and his name rendered for ever infamous.

"It is scarcely necessary to say that this hor-

rible event put an end to all thoughts of our marriage: weeping and desolation took the place of joy and contentment; mourning weeds, of bridal garments; and again I returned to my regiment, leaving Antolina and her mother in a state of mind bordering on distraction.

"One morning, whilst I was occupied in writing to Lisbon, in the wretched hovel which served me as a quarter, I was astonished by the sudden appearance of the Countess and her child. They had come up to Cartaxo to throw themselves at the feet of Lord Wellington, and to implore his intercession with the Regency; but their attempt had been fruitless: even had the English General possessed sufficient influence to arrest the hand of justice, such an act of mistaken clemency would, at that time, have been most injudicious; and therefore, in order to spare both them and himself the pain of a refusal, which his duty rendered imperative, he had declined receiving them; at the same time accompanying his denial with every mark of sympathy and consolation; and promising to exert his utmost influence to secure the estates to herself and her daughter, and, if possible, to induce the Regency

to reverse the attainder! Having accounted for her presence in the foregoing manner, Madame de —— thus addressed me, as I supported her weeping daughter in my arms.

"'You have often sworn that you love my daughter, and would sacrifice your life for the honour and happiness of my family.'"

"'Put me to the severest test,' I replied; 'it will be my greatest pride to prove the excess of my affection, by the extent of my devotion through life, both to you and to this dear being.'"

"'Such is my intention,' rejoined the Countess, whose gentleness and maternal kindness towards me appeared to have changed to a tone of settled determination and distant coldness. 'Rescue my son—assist him to escape,' she added in a low voice, 'and my daughter's hand is yours; nay, my whole estate: if not, I retract my promise; sooner shall Antolina perish than become the wife of one of those who are the murderers of her brother.'

"Astounded at this demand, I remained mute, whilst the unhappy girl clung to me with hysterical agony. Madame de —— looked at me

with an air of firm resolve, and resumed: 'You hesitate, Sir; is this the proof of your attachment and devotion? What! have you less courage than a woman? Hearken to me,—I have but a few minutes to spare. Soldiers of your nation guard the dungeon of my unhappy son: follow me to Lisbon; you will not be refused access to him: procure for Antolina the uniform of a staff-officer; she will accompany you; her height, her figure correspond with that of her brother; she will exchange clothes with him, and remain in his place. He will thus be enabled to retire with you, unnoticed and unsuspected. A boat will wait near the Arsenal to convey him across the Tagus, where horses will be in readiness, and in a few hours he will be in safety. Do this, save my son, and his sister's hand is yours; on this condition, and this alone, will I give you my daughter: if you refuse, the blood of my poor boy be upon your head, and she whom you profess to love will terminate her days in a convent.'

"In vain I urged the impossibility of complying; my honour, my duty as an officer forbad it: the difficulty of the enterprise was nothing; I

cared not for my own life; but to aid and abet a traitor, to assist him in escaping, was to declare myself his accomplice, and to brand myself with eternal infamy. I thought also of my own mother, whose existence depended on my good name, and I therefore besought the Countess, by every argument and entreaty, to retract conditions to which it was not in my power to subscribe. In the mean time Antolina, half frantic with grief, implored me to comply: there was a terrible struggle in my bosom between honour and affection, but the former triumphed.

"'A mother's curses be on your head,' said the Countess to her daughter, who with accents of despair declared she would not leave me. 'My eternal malediction be upon you, if you do not quit the false heretic forthwith;' and then, as I pressed the trembling girl to my heart, she added, 'Release her, senhor, release her instantly. Your chief has denied me mercy, he cannot refuse me justice; if you attempt to detain her, I will fly to him for protection;' then seizing the arm of her daughter, and tearing her from me, she exclaimed, 'You see her for the last time;' and

quitting the room, she left me stupified with grief and amazement. The sequel is soon told. In a few weeks the young Count —— suffered the penalty of his crimes on the scaffold, and his unhappy sister was condemned for ever to a cloister."

"Did you make no attempt to carry her off?" demanded Arthur.

"For weeks and months I endeavoured to gain access to her; but the vigilance of her guardians rendered all my attempts abortive," answered the officer; "even the place of her confinement was unknown to me, until the day on which the world closed upon her for ever."

"I cannot avoid admiring the firmness of your conduct," said Arthur, "in having refused to comply with Madame de ——'s conditions; and although I can enter fully into all the bitterness of your feeling at seeing the person whom you have tenderly loved, thus sinking before your eyes, as it were, into a living grave; yet," added he, whilst the most painful recollections came across his mind, "better a thousand times that she should thus become a martyr to filial obe-

dience, than that you should have seen her faithless and degraded."

Both officers now sunk into a deep reverie, which was uninterrupted until they reached the angle of the long arched causeway conducting into the town of Santarem.

CHAPTER XIV

"THIS spot," said Arthur's friend, as he particularly called his attention to the surrounding scenery, "had nearly been the scene of one of the most terrific combats ever fought in the Peninsula.—What think you of that as a defensive position?" added the officer, pointing to the eminences which concealed the town from their view, "flanked as it is on its left by the Tagus, protected through its whole front by this morass, over which this long causeway is the only pass; and, at the period I allude to, inaccessible on its right, except by a detour of some miles; not to mention the redoubts, intrenchments, and abattis, by which the heights were strengthened."

"The position appears impregnable," answered Beverley; "a handful of men might defend it against a host; surely it never could have been the serious intention of the Commander-in-chief to attack it."

"I beg your pardon," rejoined the other; "for, in defiance of the floods, in despite of every natural and artificial obstacle, I believe the assault was not only contemplated, but that its execution was merely prevented by a column of Portuguese having lost their road, or by some such fortuitous circumstance. Hill and Crawfurd were to have advanced across these meadows near the river; Picton, Cole, and the brave Pack, were to have attacked their right, and we were to have threaded this causeway; and the difficulties of the bridge of Al Serat would have been a trifle in comparison with it. I shall not easily forget the feeling of curiosity and respect with which I looked round those rocks, behind which our divisions were concealed. I will freely confess, when I examined the length of the causeway, extending nearly nine hundred yards, intersected with abattis and intrenchments, terminated by a

species of blockhouse, and raked by about fifty pieces of artillery; when I saw the deep morass (into which, by-the-bye, we were told we were to throw ourselves in order to turn their batteries), as well as the double position rising above it, defended by the whole French army; I do avow that I wished the day over. I think, upon walking through the divisions close assembled behind us, I never saw so many long dreary faces, or ever witnessed such a general depression of spirits: the bravest men that morning awaited, with an unusual anxiety, the signal gun which would have ushered such thousands into eternity. However, such was our confidence in our Commander and ourselves, that I have no doubt we should have succeeded; but the slaughter on our side would have been tremendous, and that too before we could have returned a shot. Had we attacked, the glories of Santarem bridge would have eclipsed those of Lodi or Arcoli.

"And gentlemen in England, then a-bed,
Had thought themselves accursed they were not here,
And held their manhood cheap, whilst any spoke
That fought with us upon that glorious day."

Passing through Thomar and Batalha, once celebrated for the wealth of its monastery, and the beauty of its unfinished chapel, commenced by King John, perhaps one of the most exquisite specimens of florid gothic architecture in Europe, they traversed Leyria and Pombal, both of which towns presented a melancholy proof of the cruel punctuality with which the devastating orders of the French Marshal had been executed. At the latter place, which once owed its prosperity and embellishment to the protection of the great minister who bore its name, Arthur's friend again pointed out the ground where Lord Wellington intended to have attacked the enemy, had not the badness of the roads and other accidental causes delayed the arrival of several divisions of the army until after nightfall.

Thence crossing for some leagues over barren moors, whose monotony was only varied by occasional clumps of black firs, or huge masses and fragments of alluvial granite, whose fantastic forms, as they lay scattered or piled one above the other, led you to suppose that this had been the field of battle selected by the Ti-

tans, they reached Redentia, where, by a masterly manœuvre, Lord Wellington turned Massena's flank, took from him an eagle and several hundred prisoners, and forced him to change the direction of his retreat. A short ride soon brought the travellers to the heights of Conduxa, and in a few minutes more the city of Coimbra, and the lovely valley of Mondego, with the distant mountains, burst upon their sight.

It was impossible to pass through the celebrated city without passing the garden in its vicinity, rendered sacred by the death of the unfortunate Inez de Castro; a spot whose calm tranquillity and solemnity appeared so well calculated to awaken sentiments of the most romantic and tender nature. Amidst groves of orange, citron, and myrtle, whose delicate blossoms, intermingling with the more gaudy flowers of the pomegranate, filled the air with their delicious fragrance, lay the crumbling moss-clad ruins of the tower once inhabited by the beautiful mistress of Don Pedro. There, perhaps upon her knees, beneath the shade of those gigantic cedars, she had gazed upon the

distant Estrella, whose snow-capped summit, tinged with the glories of the morning sun, peered high above the clouds, and taught her little ones to bless His name, before whom mountain and hill hide their diminished heads. Here, perhaps mingling her accents with the murmurs of the swift Mondego, she had sung of him she loved too well, or watched, unconscious of her impending doom, the neighbouring city's walls, whence the vile agents of the tyrant were destined to burst upon her solitude. There, beneath the branching cypress, she had been torn from the embraces of her children,—there she had vainly pleaded for mercy; and upon that rock, whose veins are tinged with red, as if in memory of the fatal deed, was spilt her gentle blood. After passing some time on this spot, the officers returned to the city, first breaking off a small fragment of the rock from whence gushes the "Fountain of Love," immortalized by that beautiful stanza of the author of the Lusiad:—

"As pelhas do Mondego a morte escura,
Longo tempo chorando memorârão,
E por memoria eterna em fonte pura,
As lagremas choradas transformârão

O nome lhe puzera que inda dura,
Dos amores de Inez que alli passârâo;
Vede, que fresca fonte rega as flores,
Que lagrimas sâo a agoa, e o nome amores."

From Coimbra the friends proceeded to Busaco; and it was with mixed feelings of wonder and admiration that Arthur gazed on the imposing spectacle which met his view from the summit of that celebrated ridge; for to the left the eye caught a glimpse of the vast Atlantic, raising, as it were, its blue waters to oppose the heavens; to the right, mountain upon mountain, crag upon crag, reared their points above the mist, here glittering with the dazzling reflection of the sunbeams, and there curling up their bleak and arid flanks in dark and shady grandeur. Northward, as far as the eye could span, extended a succession of plains, chequered here and there with sombre forests of pine and cork, or intersected with a thousand sparkling streams and fertile valleys; whilst immediately contiguous to the spot where they stood, was the beautiful wilderness, or garden of the Carthusian Convent, which lay embosomed amidst groves of luxuriant tim-

ber, whose rich vegetation, like an Oasis in the desert, formed a singular contrast to the rugged grandeur and asperity of the surrounding scene.

"How changed," said the officer, as he pointed out to Beverley the different positions occupied by the contending armies during the battle; "how changed since I was last here! how still, how tranquil now! nought to interrupt the solemn silence of nature, but the scream of yon eagle, which, perhaps, battened on the carnage of that day, or the bleating of yonder goatherd's flocks, now quietly browsing on the herbage moistened by the blood of heroes. Who would imagine, upon looking at this spot, —so solitary, so peaceful,—that it once resounded with the thunder of cannon, and the shouts of martial strife?"

"Had Massena sought to expose every movement of his army to his adversary, he could not have selected a spot better adapted for the purpose; why, you must have seen down their very throats."

"We saw their backs, my friend," rejoined the other, "and that, too, in a manner more

decisive than it is possible for you to imagine. It was altogether a spectacle one may not live to see again. There, as far as you can see, those plains were covered with the numerous columns of their vast army, every man of which we could count, their train, and their hospitals by day; whilst at night the whole face of the country appeared spangled with their watch-fires, or illuminated by the lurid glare of some unhappy village, which had fallen a sacrifice to the flames. Behind these ridges, far to the right and left, lay our people effectually concealed. There, near that huge fragment of granite, which rears itself over yonder ravine, stood Lord Wellington, during the greater part of the combat; there, far to the right, was Hill; there, Cole; there, behind that knoll, the Guards; there, on the extreme left, black Crawfurd; and here, Picton, the gallant Picton; and there," continued the officer, "was the 74th, whose battle cry, 'Assaye!' whilst it filled the heart of Lord Wellington with glorious recollections of former days, must have struck terror into that of the enemy, when these brave bands sprung cheering to the charge."

"Where were you?" demanded Arthur; "it must have been a scene of wonderful interest to a spectator?"

"It was, indeed, an awful sight," answered the officer: "as the day dawned, and the mist cleared away from the bosom of the mountain, to see the cool, steady, and determined manner in which their columns ascended these acclivities, preceded by a cloud of skirmishers, which, when they neared the summit, were recalled to the main body; all was silent, save here and there a falling shot, the clinking of the arms, or the dead sound of ten thousand footsteps striking in marching time upon the ground. I watched the progress of those dark masses, as they slowly advanced, with feelings of indescribable, breathless interest; my pulse beat almost audibly. I saw them gain the crown of the hill, and commence deploying. I was in a state of excruciating anxiety and suspense; where, thought I, are our guns? where our troops? have they retired? Suddenly the sharp compact roll of one heavy deadly volley, accompanied by the simultaneous discharges of artillery, came pealing on my ear: there was

a silence, short, but awfully impressive; but ere the rolling echoes which reverberated from crag to crag in these mountainous regions had died away in the distance, the loud appalling huzza of the charge shook the very rocks, and, in a moment more, I saw the whole body of the enemy driven down the hill in the utmost state of terror and confusion. Then arose the groans of the dying, mingled with the shouts of the victors, the roaring of cannon, the whistling of shot, and the rattle of drums, whilst the cry for mercy was answered by the yell of triumph. Every vein in my body swelled, as it were, with fire. I thought my bosom would have burst with the extraordinary sensations which oppressed me. I could scarcely restrain my men from joining their comrades, who, like furious lions pursuing a herd of antelopes, sprung from rock to rock after the flying foe."

"Did the French officers make no effort to rally or arrest their flight?" demanded Arthur.

"Every thing that brave men could do, was attempted; but in vain; the panic was irresistible. I shall never forget one young man, a

Captain of Voltigeurs, who had been borne away by the torrent; as soon as he could extricate himself from the mass, he turned round, sprang on that slab of granite, raved, swore, seized some of the fugitives by the collar, struck at others with his sword, now appealing to their honour in those exciting terms, which are generally so efficacious with French soldiers, and now, with the most frantic gestures, imprecating curses on their cowardice. Anxious, if possible, to rescue so brave a man from the fate which I feared awaited him, in the furious and excited state of the British soldiers, I quickly dispatched a few men to seize and save him; but ere this could be effected, we saw him suddenly start, and bound into the air: his cap fell, his sword flew from his hand, and pitching head foremost, he rolled down the hill to within a few feet of the place where I stood. In a moment, I was at his side; but life was extinct, a bullet had pierced his heart. Poor fellow! his noble figure, his light flowing curls, his gentle countenance, gentle though still bearing the impression of the fiery passions which had animated him a moment before, will not

easily be effaced from my mind. There was another cause for my feeling interested and affected at his fate; for, on examining his wound, I found the miniature of a beautiful female suspended round his neck—his wife perhaps—at all events, the object of his affection. When I compared the bright and beaming eyes, the rosy lips, and cheering smile of the beautiful features in my hand, with the livid and stiffening corpse at my feet, a feeling of the most painful commiseration crossed my mind, and, strange as it may appear, marred all the joy I otherwise should have felt in the success of our arms. But the portrait is still in my possession: at some future period it may be in my power to trace out the original, and by recounting the noble manner of the young soldier's death, afford some consolation to the heart which mourns his loss."

The officers now proceeded on their journey, and in a few days reached the small Spanish town of Fuente Guinaldo, which had long been the head-quarters of the British army.

Having reported his arrival, and delivered the letters of recommendation of which he was

the bearer, Beverley received an invitation to dine with Lord Wellington on the following day; and it was with feelings of no common interest that he awaited the moment of presentation to the "*Chance Victor!*"* who, after defeating every French Marshal opposed to him, not in one hazardous battle, but during six successive years, was destined to wrench the laurels of victory from the brow itself of the great Conqueror of Europe.

* Vide one of Mr. O'Connell's speeches.

CHAPTER XV.

BEING personally acquainted with one or two young noblemen attached to the immediate staff of the Commander-in-chief, Arthur was soon introduced to several other officers, who were assembled in the small apartment which served the double purpose of dining-room and saloon to Lord Wellington; and although Beverley, individually, had no cause to complain, yet it was impossible for him to avoid remarking, and contrasting, the good-humoured civility and attention of some of the gentlemen of his Lordship's suite to strangers, with the insolent flippancy, arrogance, and utter want of good breeding of others.

It is but justice, however, to say, that this

conduct, so universally felt and reprobated by all those whom business or the calls of hospitality brought within the walls of the Commander-in-chief, was principally confined to two or three inexperienced young men who had seen little of the world, and who, possessing neither rank nor consideration as soldiers, or members of the great body of society, met with the punishment which their injudicious behaviour merited, in the utter contempt and derision of all classes of their brother officers.

Before Lord Wellington made his appearance, Beverley had sufficient time to cast his eye round the apartment, which occupied the first floor of almost the only house in the village, dignified with two stories; and it was not without feelings of more than common curiosity, that he examined its low dingy walls, its small uncurtained windows, in which oiled paper frequently supplied the place of the broken panes; its camp chairs and three-legged stools; its rude chimney and rough grate, ornamented on one side with a few of the most recent caricatures from England, and on the other, with a list of the hunting days for the ensuing week, or that

of the arrival and departure of the English mails: his eye wandered first to the doors, on which noses, eyes, whiskered faces, French shakos, and English hats, had been scored with hot irons; and then to the ceiling, on which God-dems, Frog-soup, Rosbif, Gloire Françoise, My eye and Betty Martin, Austerlitz, Sacré-bleus, Talavera, and other national witticisms and recollections, had been traced with burnt stick, according as the little town had been alternately occupied by our troops or those of the enemy.

On observing the meanness, and want of even common furniture, of this apartment, which had so long been the abode of the great man, whose most trifling actions and mode of life were so interesting to his countrymen, and contrasting it with the cheerful and contented countenances of the distinguished persons present, one felt most forcibly that the enjoyments of this life derive the greater portion of their charm and savour from comparison and locality; or perhaps are altogether the result of the combinations and associations of the imagination. It has been the lot of many of the illus-

trious individuals whom Beverley saw in that apartment, to have been called to the most exalted and brilliant stations in their respective countries, and to have been consequently placed in the enjoyment of every luxury and indulgence, which wealth and rank could command, or the most fastidious appetite require: yet I will venture to affirm, that the feelings of pleasure with which they now regard the rich and costly furniture, the splendid pictures, mirrors, vases, and carpets, and the thousand ingenious and luxurious inventions which crowd their palaces, are far inferior to those sentiments of satisfaction and contentment which filled their hearts, when they compared the comforts of their own situation with the miseries and hardships to which the great majority of their brethren in arms were exposed,—hardships which they then knew how to estimate, since it was their fate not unfrequently to partake them.

Dinner being placed on the table, Lord Wellington issued from his cabinet, attended by one or two Spanish officers, and with that peculiar expression of mouth, that elevation of eyebrow, which forms so remarkable a feature in his

countenance, made his bow to his guests. Beverley was presented in his turn, and received with great courtesy; a few rapid questions were asked and answered with equal conciseness, and the party sat down to a repast; not such, perhaps, as Lord Atherly would have ordered at the Rocher de Cancale, but such a one as accorded with the temperate habits of the host, and was well suited to please men who had learned the necessity of eating in order to live, and not that of living merely to eat.

A stranger naturally expected that the conversation during dinner would have assumed a degree of seriousness and gravity proportionate to the momentous nature of the imposing events which then agitated Europe, as well as the important functions intrusted to the various individuals present; but in this he would have been disappointed. Although the eyes of Europe were turned with intense anxiety to the Peninsula; although the British General had not only to oppose a valiant and powerful enemy in the field—an enemy worthy of his genius and the bravery of his soldiers; although his mind was harassed with futile attempts to reconcile the

jarring interests, and pacify the dissensions which racked the Spanish councils; although he had to combat numerous opponents in the government at home, advocates of that false system of economy, that fallacious and mistaken policy which had so often proved fatal to the British arms; in short, although he had to contend with obstacles and embarrassments which might have overwhelmed the generality of men,—obstacles to which, in a great measure, the brave Moore fell a victim; yet his great mind rose triumphant over every difficulty, and constantly displayed a degree of calmness, confidence, and apparent mental repose, which excited the astonishment of all those who were in the habit of seeing him; not more, however, than the wonderful promptitude and regularity with which he transacted public business, and attended personally to the most minute and trivial details in the administration of the army.

Instead of discussing marches, sieges, and manœuvres, or assuming that air of pedantic mystery which is, generally speaking, the only resource of inferior minds, his conversation was open and unreserved, avoiding, it is true, rather than courting the discussion of military

topics; but when they were touched upon, he gave his opinion with frankness and simplicity, and with a degree of decision and conciseness as clear as it was convincing. To the surprise of many old officers who dined at his table, and who came prepared to discuss squares, bastions, and countermarches, and all the other technical galamathias of the profession, he rarely addressed himself to them, preferring to converse with the young men present, into whose jokes, sports, and amusements, he appeared to enter with as much interest and merriment as themselves.

The pleasure which Beverley felt in all he heard and saw, was increased by the casual presence of several individuals of rank in the allied armies; and being seated near an officer who appeared well acquainted with every one at table, his curiosity was quickly satisfied.

"Who is that mild, amiable-looking young officer, seated on Lord Wellington's right hand?" demanded Arthur.

"That," replied his neighbour, "is the Prince of Orange, a young man of great promise, who combines all the rare qualities which ought to adorn the mind of a prince, with the not less

essential perfections of a gentleman; condescending without familiarity, indulgent without weakness, generous without extravagance, and brave as the sword he wears: he is as much respected as he is beloved by us all."

"I rejoice to hear it; it is generally reported," said Arthur, "in England, that an alliance is contemplated, which will attach him by the strongest ties to the nation."

"The choice of the illustrious persons most interested in such an union could not have fallen on one more worthy of them, or more admirably adapted, in every point of view, to gain the affections of the British people: educated amongst us, accustomed to our national habits and prejudices, possessing our language to perfection, impressed with a sense of the blessings of our venerable Constitution, himself a lover of rational liberty; springing from a valiant race, whose blood has always flowed in the cause of freedom; personally known and esteemed by thousands, whose perils and dangers he has shared, and who have been witnesses to his intrepidity as a soldier and his good qualities as a man, he is, of all other princes in Europe, the best suited to the English nation."

"All I hope is," rejoined Arthur, "that no vile political intrigues, no abominable cabal, may ever prevent his obtaining from the whole population of Great Britain, that homage as a right, which he has already fully gained from the army by his merit, his valour, and his amiable qualities.—Who," continued Arthur, "is that seated on the opposite side, with the rich embroidered coat?"

"That," replied his friend, "is the General upon whose brow the undaunted heroism and matchless devotion of the bravest troops in the world forced the bloodiest laurels ever worn upon a field of battle,—a triumph of which not one single particle, save the horrible carnage, can be attributed to his previous combinations or immediate dispositions, and which his subsequent want of energy and decision rendered absolutely null. Had the God of battles selected him as one of his victims, instead of any other of the brave men who fell that day, the command would then have devolved upon another; and although that other had been the youngest soldier of those heroic bands, that which was in fact a mere sanguinary repulse, a mutual slaughter, would have been converted into one of the most

splendid triumphs which ever graced the annals of English history."

"Who is the grey-headed, venerable-looking man to whom he is speaking?"

"He with the red pantaloons in Castaños, a man who, though not superior in military science to his neighbour, possessed sufficient tact and presence of mind to take advantage at Baylen of a few favourable circumstances which the imbecility of his opponent placed in his hands; and he was thus enabled to convert that which should have been a defeat, into the most decisive and glorious victory ever won by the Spanish arms. Although he is neither brilliant as a politician nor eminent as a commander, he is an honest man, a *rara avis* in Spain, staunch and sincere in the cause of his country; and being above all those mean fanatical jealousies which disgrace his countrymen in general, he joins heartily and cordially with us. He is perhaps, of all the Spanish chiefs, the only one on whose integrity and good faith implicit reliance can be placed; and I firmly believe that Lord Wellington is principally indebted to his exertions for whatever co-operation he meets with either from the juntas, or the troops.—The next person," continued the

officer, "is the generous and gallant Alava, one of the bravest and best of his nation: were all Spaniards like him, there would be no necessity for our services in this country,—the freedom of Spain would be secured. Farther on, he with dark eyes, and rather fine expression of countenance, is Don Carlos d'Espagna, commanding a small Spanish corps supposed to co-operate with us; he passes current at present for an honest man, and much attached to us; but the time will come when his hypocrisy, his cruelty, his rapacity and hatred, not only to the English but to every human being who professes to be an advocate of liberty, will be made manifest. I have had occasion to ascertain his real character."

The conversation now happened to turn upon the merits of Lord Wellington's fox-hounds. One of the young officers, to whom his Lordship had addressed himself, said,—

"By the bye, my Lord, I am in despair: I have lost my celebrated bull-dog; they say, that it must have been carried over to the French by a deserter from the guides."

"Shall I send in a flag of truce to inquire, and beg Marshal Marmont to offer a reward for

its recovery?" replied Lord Wellington, with apparent gravity.

"I should be much obliged if your Lordship would," rejoined the other; "though they will not release a man, I dare say they will not object to return the dog."

"Well, if you will write to the Duke of Ragusa, I will send in your letter," answered Lord Wellington; "but, were I in your place, I would permit it to remain where it is. I should think that the dog and the deserter were of equal value."

"Of no value," retorted the other; "why, I received it as a particular favour from Bill Gibbons himself."

"I am very sorry to differ with Mr. Gibbons," answered Lord Wellington; "but my opinion is, that both you and I have rather gained by our loss."

"Good God, my Lord!" exclaimed the officer, lifting up his eyes, "what! differ with Bill on such a point as this?"

"He may be admirable authority," answered the Marquis; "but, to tell you the truth, I do not know who the deuce he is."

"What! not know Bill Gibbons!" ejacu-

lated the other, at the same time dropping his knife and fork with evident marks of surprise; "what! not know Bill Gibbons! Why, where can you have lived?"

One of those short, sharp, peculiar hahs! broke from Lord Wellington, as he heartily joined in the laugh which this exclamation drew forth.

Perceiving that three or four members of his staff were absent, Lord Wellington said, "Where is Captain ——?"

"Gone over to Gallegos, to the light division; he plays Lydia Languish, in the Rivals, this evening," was the reply.

"Hah!" rejoined the Commander-in-chief; "I fear they must look out for another theatre. I have received a memorial from the Alcalde, complaining of their having converted the Chapel into a salle de spectacle; and it seems that the Curate does not think it by any means orthodox to consent to General Crawfurd's proposition, of their giving alternate representations; —but where," continued the Marquis, "are the others gone?"

"To Pueblo, my Lord, to dine with the Guards," replied some one present.

The second course was now placed on the table, and the maitre d'hôtel whispered something in Colonel Campbell's ear, who, leaning across, said in an under-voice, "The cook begs your Lordship will excuse him for the substitution at the bottom of the table; he says, that the Guards have intercepted all the turkeys."

"In that case," replied Lord Wellington, smiling, "I am not surprised that my aid-de-camps go over to dine with them; but, between ourselves, it is rather too bad of the gentlemen's sons thus to cut off my supplies, and to deprive me at the same time of the consolation of my aide-de-camps' society; egad, unless I send them to starve at the outposts, they will famish me."

"It is entirely your fault," said one of the young men winking, and turning to a dark, Jewish-looking Portuguese officer who sat near him.

"Oh, by Got, how can you shay sho; what a devilsh have I got to do wid a Turkish!" replied the individual alluded to.

"Hah," exclaimed Lord Wellington, "very true; pray, Senhor, why do you not take care

that we are better supplied from the interior? why do you not write to some of the magistrates?"

"Vy, I can't make dee Turkish, you know, my Lord," rejoined the Portuguese; "and if I write to the Capitao Mohrs, or the Juiz de Fora, they ansher wid dee old shong, '*aqui nâo ha mas em Lisboa muito*,'—or elsh," added he, applying the inverted nail of his thumb with a jerking movement to his front teeth, "dey shay dat '*os malditos Francesco nâo tem deiscado nada nem hum--goutinha d'agoa*;' but datsh humpug: if your Lordship will give me ordersh to put dee Turkish in rekishishin, well then, I shall get you a whole flog."

"What, and purposely send them through Pueblo to be intercepted by the Guards?" said Lord Wellington, smiling.

"Oh, no, by Got, my Lord, dee Carts shan't intershept me, unlesh dey pay double."

"Hah! you pocket the money, and I go without my dinner."

The entrance of the orderly serjeant with despatches, which were immediately opened by Lord Wellington, put an end to all further general conversation. Not long after this, his

Lordship rose from table, and retired into his cabinet, and the guests departed; some to pass the evening in attending to the duties of their respective offices, some to make up a rubber, others to listen to the charming notes of Fuentes, the pupil of Moretti; some to join in an impromptu dance got up on the mud floor of some peasant's cottage; and others again to kill the night in the more riotous delights of smoking, drinking, and chicken hazard.

Ere many days, Beverley became perfectly reconciled to his new mode of life, the duties of the public department to which he was attached, combined with the activity and variety incidental to head-quarters, occupied his mind, and left him little leisure to think of himself, or the causes which had induced him to quit England.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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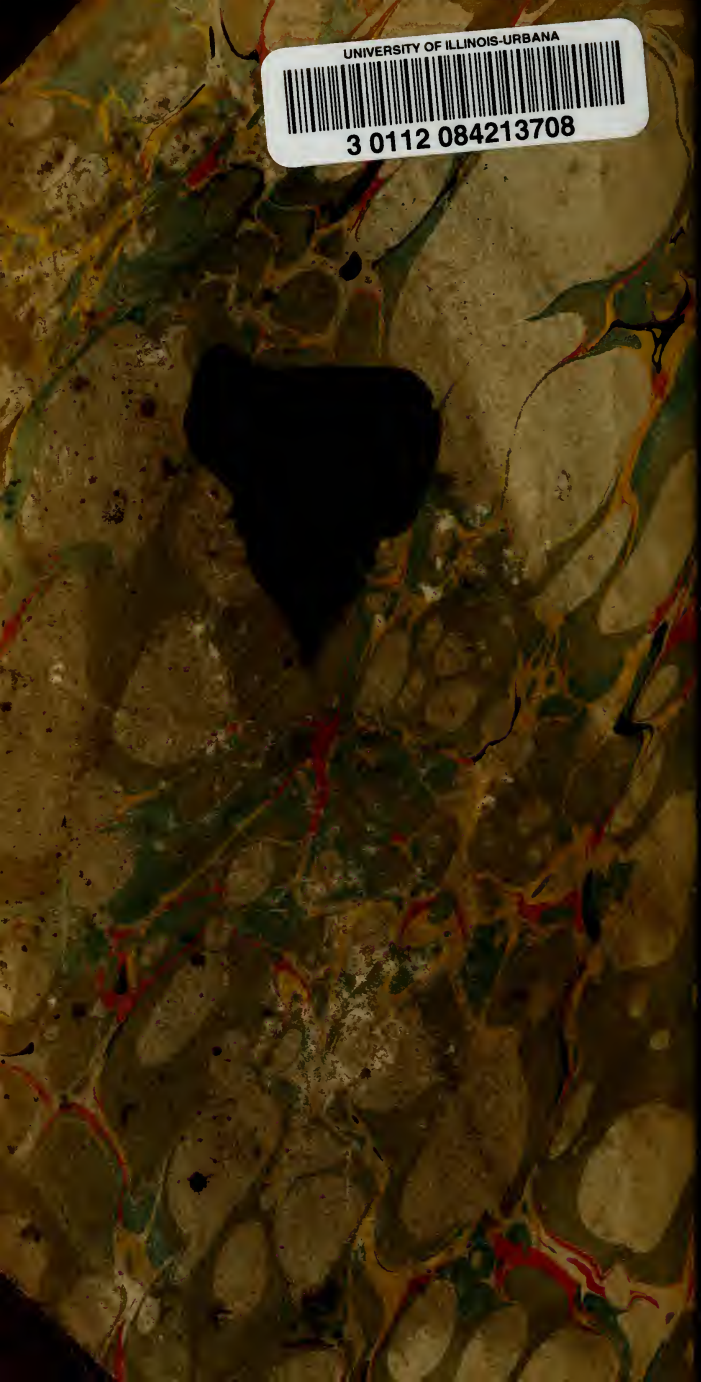
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